

O'Dwyer's

Communications & New Media

Jan. 2024 | Vol. 38 No. 1


SPECIAL ISSUE: CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'RE A TARGET OF MISINFORMATION • COMMUNICATIONS AND THE NATIONAL SUICIDE CRISIS

BUILDING REPUTATIONAL RESILIENCE • RISK AVERSION IN CRISIS MEDIA RELATIONS • TURNING A CRISIS INTO A WIN

PR SUPPORT WHEN YOU'RE CALLED TO TESTIFY ON CAPITOL HILL • WHY DATA TELLS THE REAL CRISIS STORY

PR'S ROLE IN LITIGATION STRATEGY • CRISIS AND NONPROFIT BOARDS • WHEN IT'S TIME TO SELL YOUR PR AGENCY



**2024 PR
BUYER'S GUIDE**
PRODUCTS & SERVICES IN
MORE THAN 40 CATEGORIES
FOR THE PR INDUSTRY

January 2024

www.odwyerpr.com

KARV + JCI WORLDWIDE

Stellar Strategic Communications & Crisis Counsel – for Unprecedented Times

KARV and JCI Worldwide help clients solve their most difficult communications challenges. Our team brings decades of global expertise and a comprehensive approach to crisis communications, issues management, advisory services, and high-level strategic counsel. We leverage our deep and lasting relationships across a broad spectrum of industries and disciplines from around the world on behalf of clients navigating challenge and change.

- > CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
- > ISSUES MANAGEMENT
- > CRISIS MANAGEMENT/PLANNING
- > LITIGATION SUPPORT COMMUNICATIONS
- > MEDIA RELATIONS/THOUGHT LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGNS
- > FINANCIAL COMMUNICATIONS
- > PERSONAL REPUTATION MANAGEMENT
- > SOCIAL MEDIA/BRAND DEVELOPMENT
- > PUBLIC AFFAIRS/GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
- > ESG AND SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES
- > GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY



KARV.GLOBAL

JCIPR.COM





A TRUSTED ADVISOR FOR CRITICAL COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS

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.

**Financial
Communications
& Investor Relations**

**Crisis
Communications &
Issues Management**

**Corporate
Governance
Communications**



GLADSTONEPLACE.COM

New York Office:
485 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

San Francisco Office:
535 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

EDITORIAL

READERS DON'T TRUST
AI-GENERATED NEWS

HEALTHCARE COMPANIES
HEADY ABOUT AI IN '24

PR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023

DATA TELLS THE CRISIS
STORY

GOOD LABOR RELATIONS
BEGIN WITH AI

RISK AVERSION IN CRISIS
MEDIA RELATIONS

BUILD REPUTATIONAL
RESILIENCE

DISINFORMATION TOP
AMERICAN CONCERN

ENGAGING EMPLOYEES
IN A NOISY YEAR

YOUR GRANDFATHER'S
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TIME FOR MARKETERS
TO GET CREATIVE

NAVIGATING THE STORM

NONPROFIT BOARDS
PLAY KEY CRISIS ROLE:

THE CRISIS CONTINUUM

NAVIGATING A VOLATILE
FUTURE

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR
CRISIS PREPARATION

CRISIS COMMS.
RESOLUTIONS

6

8

9

10

12

14

16

18

19

20

22

24

26

28

30

32

34

36

38

40

42

44

46

48

50

54

56

58

60

62

64

64

78

COLUMNS

76

77

80

CRISIS COMMS.
AT THE CROSSROADS

HOW CRISIS PR CAN HELP
IN SUICIDE PREVENTION.

SO, YOU'RE TESTIFYING
ON CAPITOL HILL

THE POWER OF
STRATEGIC ACQUISITIONS

TURNING A CRISIS
INTO A WIN

LEADERSHIP FROM
THE BOTTOM UP

WHEN YOU'RE A TARGET
OF MISINFORMATION

THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE
OF BRAND PURPOSE

WHEN IT'S TIME TO SELL
YOUR PR AGENCY

COMMUNICATIONS' ROLE
IN LITIGATION STRATEGY

RICHARD LEVICK: REFLECTIONS
ON A LIFE FORCE

PEOPLE IN PR

PROFILES OF CRISIS
COMMUNICATIONS FIRMS

WASHINGTON
REPORT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fraser Seitel

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Dominic Rovano

2024 PR BUYER'S
GUIDE

64

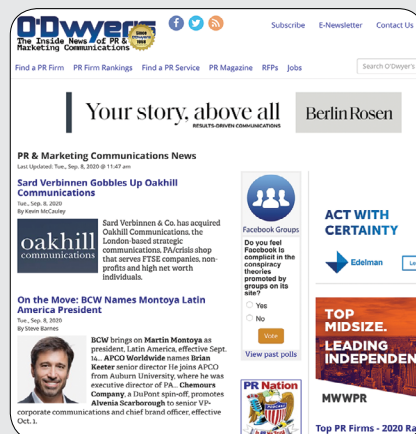
PR BUYER'S GUIDE

2024

80

WWW.ODWYERPR.COM

Daily, up-to-the-minute PR news



EDITORIAL CALENDAR 2024

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

BerlinRosen.....49
C Street Advisory Group.....41
Collected Strategies.....5
Cornerstone Government Affairs.....39
Crosswind Media & PR.....37
Dentons Global Advisors.....29
Edelman.....52 & 53
FGS Global.....15
FINN Partners.....35

G&S Business Comms.....Back Cover
Gladstone Place Partners.....3
H/Advisors Abernathy.....7
ICR.....63
Infinite Global.....43
Joele Frank.....69
KARV Communications.....Inside Cover
KekstCNC.....61
Leidar.....25

The Levinson Group.....55
Longacre Square Partners.....47
Public Communications Inc.....9
Public Policy Holding Co.....31
Reevemark.....13
Reputation Doctor.....8
ROKK Solutions.....17
Sachs Media, Inc.....57
Sitrick And Company.....67

SKDK.....33
Sloane & Company.....59
Stanton.....27
The Stevens Group.....23
Avoq.....51
Trident DMG.....21
Weber Shandwick.....45

Deep Experience.
Unique Perspective.



COLLECTED
STRATEGIES

collectedstrategies.com

PR firms close out a tough year

The number of public relations agencies that are expecting to see a jump in either revenue or profits when they close the books on 2023 has taken a considerable hit when compared to last year, according to a new study released by legal firm Davis+Gilbert.

In its “2023 Public Relations Industry Trends Report,” Davis+Gilbert, which specializes in the advertising, marketing communications and media sectors, got responses from 182 firms on such topics as profitability, artificial intelligence and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Nearly three-quarters of the firms surveyed said that they would see revenue in excess of \$5 million for the year. And more than half of the respondents (53 percent) said that, in terms of revenue, they were expecting 2023 to wind up being a better year than 2022. But that’s not nearly as optimistic a view as they had last year, when 88 percent of respondents predicted a revenue hike.

What’s worse, a third (34 percent) of firms surveyed predicted that their revenue would drop—a big jump from the 5 percent who made the same prediction in 2022. No change in revenue was expected by 13 percent (up from 7 percent last year).

Profit estimates showed an equal cooling down of industry optimism. While nearly half (47 percent) look for profits to increase for 2023, 69 percent did so for 2022. In addition, almost as many (40 percent) anticipate a drop in profits (up from 15 percent last year).

Firms staffing between 50-99 employees are being hit a little harder than others, the study’s results say. Of those firms, 67 percent expect to see decreased revenues and 75 percent are planning for lower profits.

When the numbers are broken down by market sectors, healthcare comes out on top, with 80 percent expecting increased revenue and 60 percent looking toward higher profits. Following behind are public affairs (67 percent higher revenues, 34 percent higher profits) and corporate/financial (58 percent higher revenues and 34 percent higher profits).

The effect of AI on bottom lines seems to be good. Of the firms that have seen revenue or profit increases of 10 percent or more, three-quarters (75 percent) are currently using AI. Almost half (47 percent) of all firms using AI say they expect it to result in revenue increases for the year, and 24 percent are anticipating a profit hike.

The most popular use of AI is written content creation (47 percent), with ideation (37 percent), social listening (34 percent) and conducting market research (33 percent) also being prevalent choices.

DEI is still definitely on the radar, but its growth does seem to be slowing somewhat. More than four in 10 firms (42 percent) increased the number of employees “from historically underrepresented groups” in 2023, down a bit from the 60 percent who said that for last year.

Looking toward the future, overall optimism seems to be winding down a bit as well. While 66 percent voiced a positive outlook for 2023, only 53 percent expressed optimism when it comes to looking in the crystal ball for 2024.

According to respondents, top challenges include client budgets remaining flat or decreasing, the rising cost of talent and the difficulty in retaining existing talent. **○**

— *Steve Barnes*

O'Dwyer's

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kevin McCauley
kevin@odwyerpr.com

PUBLISHER

John O'Dwyer
john@odwyerpr.com

SENIOR EDITOR

Jon Gingerich
jon@odwyerpr.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Steve Barnes
steve@odwyerpr.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Fraser Seitel

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS & RESEARCH

Jane Landers
Melissa Webell

Advertising Sales:

John O'Dwyer
john@odwyerpr.com

O'Dwyer's is published seven times a year for \$60.00 (\$7.00 a single issue) by the J.R. O'Dwyer Co., Inc.
271 Madison Ave., #1500
New York, NY 10016.
(212) 679-2471 Fax: (212) 683-2750.

© Copyright 2024 J.R. O'Dwyer Co., Inc.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

www.odwyerpr.com

Breaking news, commentary, useful databases and more.

O'Dwyer's Newsletter

A six-page weekly with general PR news, media appointments and placement opportunities.

O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms

Listings of more than 1,250 PR firms throughout the U.S. and abroad.

O'Dwyer's PR Buyer's Guide

Products and services for the PR industry in 50 categories.

jobs.odwyerpr.com

O'Dwyer's online job center has helped wanted ads and hosts resume postings.

Your partner in communication.

H/Advisors Abernathy is a trusted strategic communications advisor and your partner in engaging with key stakeholders on complex issues. Our firm specializes in advising CEOs, board directors and senior executives on effective stakeholder communications and engagement. For nearly 40 years, our strategic communications experts have been entrusted by clients across sectors and around the world to help build, protect and enhance their reputations, boost value and seize new opportunities.



Readers don't trust AI-generated news

Consumers see news content created with AI as untrustworthy and want news media organizations to label any AI-generated content they publish, according to a recent study.

By Jon Gingerich

Sports Illustrated came under fire recently for surreptitiously publishing a series of AI-generated articles credited to authors that don't exist. The ensuing public furor over the incident suggests a looming challenge for publishers that have adopted or are currently experimenting with artificial intelligence, at a time when trust in the news is already at an all-time low. If there's a single takeaway from the *SI* fiasco, it's this: Media organizations debating the use of AI-generated content in their newsrooms should proceed with extreme caution.

Case in point: Most American news consumers perceive articles written by AI as less trustworthy and want publishers to disclose when they've used AI in news stories, according to a study conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota's Hubbard School of Journalism & Mass Communication and the University of Oxford's Oxford Internet Institute.

The study, which analyzed audience perceptions of AI-generated news content, suggests that the use of AI newsrooms remains

an unpopular idea. The largest share of respondents polled (40 percent) said they believe AI technologies do a "worse job than humans" when it comes to producing news content, compared to a third (33 percent) who said they do "about the same job."

Only about one in ten (11 percent) said they think AI does "a better job than humans" in a newsroom, while an additional 16 percent admitted that they "don't know."

In addition, 81 percent said they believe news organizations should "alert readers or viewers" anytime AI is used in the creation of news content, and 78 percent of those who advocated for this disclosure also believe news organizations "should provide an explanatory note describing how AI was used."

Half of respondents (50 percent) said they're in favor of news organizations providing bylines on stories "attributing the work to AI."

Perhaps the most damning indictment is the study's discovery that people are less likely to trust AI-written articles regardless

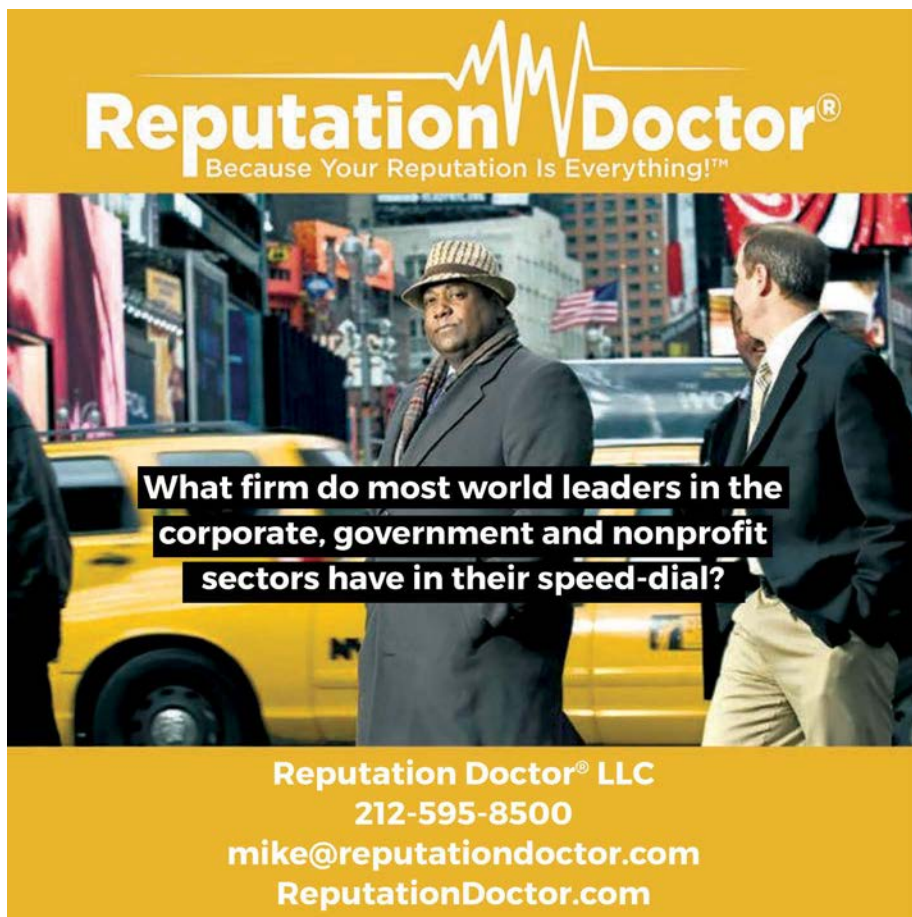
of the content those articles contain or the claims they make. Respondents were asked to read news articles containing a variety of political content, some of which were labeled as AI-generated, with many of those AI-labeled articles accompanied by a list of news sources used. Overall, respondents rated the AI-generated stories lower than the articles that did not contain such a label, even though respondents didn't evaluate those articles as being inaccurate or biased.

One silver lining, however—and perhaps a potential path forward for the use of generative AI in newsrooms—is that AI-produced content fared better with audiences when those articles provided a list of sources. Researchers discovered that the "negative effects associated with perceived trustworthiness are largely counteracted" when AI-written articles shown to respondents cited sources alongside the articles.

Some experts have suggested that the use of AI in newsrooms or the curation of algorithmic content in stories might reduce the public's perception of bias. However, the study discovered that those who already distrust the news media or aren't very knowledgeable about journalism weren't swayed in their convictions whenever articles came with an AI label. Making matters worse, the study also found that people who generally trust the media and exhibit an understanding of what reporting entails appear to be the most negatively affected by the presence of AI labels. This suggests that AI could further worsen America's news trust crisis, as it may negatively impact the sentiment among the remaining share of U.S. news consumers who still currently trust that institution.

Only about a quarter of respondents (28 percent) said they'd heard or read "a lot" about news organizations using generative AI to write articles and report on events, while nearly two-thirds (63 percent) said they'd heard "a little." Fewer than one in ten (9 percent) said they'd heard "nothing at all" about the phenomenon. The study pointed out that respondents who said they'd heard or read "a lot" about news organizations using generative AI were almost twice as likely to say they think AI does a better job than humans in writing news articles (16 percent versus 9 percent).

The study, titled "Or they could just not use it?": The Paradox of AI Disclosure for Audience Trust in News," surveyed nearly 1,500 U.S.-based participants and was conducted in September. The study is currently a "preprint" that hasn't yet been peer-reviewed. ○



Reputation Doctor®
Because Your Reputation Is Everything!™

What firm do most world leaders in the corporate, government and nonprofit sectors have in their speed-dial?

Reputation Doctor® LLC
212-595-8500
mike@reputationdoctor.com
ReputationDoctor.com

Healthcare companies heady about AI in '24

Healthcare and life sciences companies are banking on artificial intelligence technology in 2024, according to a recent study.

By Steve Barnes

Healthcare and life sciences companies are expecting artificial intelligence, along with other technological advances, to give the industry a boost in 2024, counterbalancing the effects of economic and political uncertainty.

That's the conclusion of the U.S. Healthcare & Life Sciences Industry Outlook 2024 study recently released by FTI Consulting.

The general level of optimism of the respondents in the new survey was 68 percent, an 8 percent drop from last year. And while a solid 79 percent say they are optimistic about their own firm's financial performance, that's still down 8 percent from the 87 percent who said that in the last study.

The HCLS leaders still expect market activity to rise in most cases, though just slightly. About two-thirds (67 percent) think that M&A activity will go up, a 4 percent bump from last year. An even smaller hike (1 percent) is expected for IPO activity, which would hit 54 percent. A 2 percent drop in SPAC activity, to 48 percent, is predicted.

Several major risks may be contributing to the optimism slowdown. Foremost among them is general economic uncertainty, which was cited by 40 percent of respondents. Cybersecurity tied for second place on the list with talent scarcity (both at 24 percent), and declining reimbursement rates (21 percent) were also a major concern.

Half of the respondents (50 percent) said they feel vulnerable to a cyberattack or incident. Among the possible effects of cyberattacks to the industry, 56 percent cited data access/exposure, 49 percent said financial costs and 46 percent predicted an impact on patient care.

But technology also has its upside. Two-thirds of the respondents (66 percent) said that AI has the potential to create efficiencies within the drug development cycle, and an equal number say it could also positively affect the industry in areas other than drug development.

The survey also examined the effect of government policy on the financial outlook of the HCLS sector. The Biden administration's impact on the sector is viewed positively by 49 percent of respondents, with 40 percent saying that the impact is a negative one.

The Inflation Reduction Act is also seen as both a good and bad influence. More

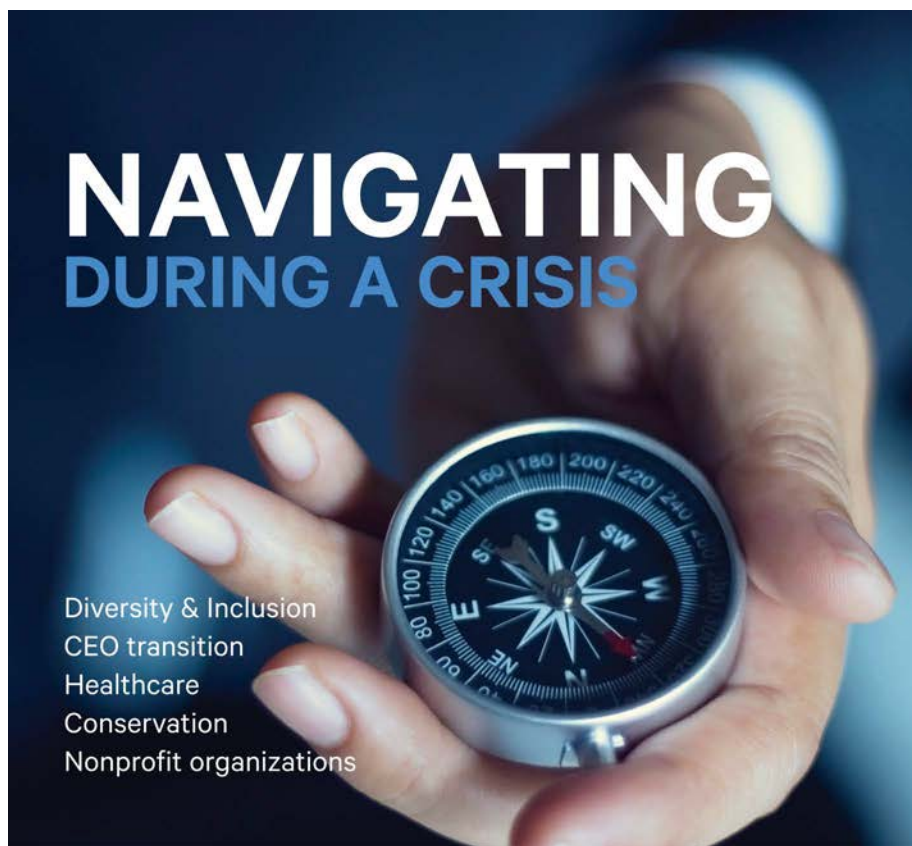
than six in ten (62 percent) say the IRA will encourage the development and demand for vaccines, and 60 percent say it will do the same for biologics. But nearly as many (58 percent) predict that the IRA will result in more lawsuits being filed, due to its impact on business activity.

In addition, 25 percent think that the IRA will negatively affect patient access to and affordability of care, with 22 percent expect-

ing it to slow down orphan drug development in 2024.

With 48 percent of the companies expecting their expenditures to rise next year, marketing is holding its position as an important part of that spending. While R&D is the top candidate for increased expenditures (48 percent), marketing is a close second (43 percent), with retaining (43 percent) and recruiting (42 percent) talent just behind.

The study was conducted by FTI Consulting's Strategic Communications team between Oct. 9-18. ○



PCI's experienced crisis and issue management counselors bring calm to crisis



Public
Communications
Inc.

For crisis and
reputation counsel,
call 312.558.1770



pcipr.com

Lets_talk@pciipr.com

©2024 Public Communications Inc.

PR firms seek to regain financial footing

PR firms came off their “post-pandemic high” in 2023 as they were forced to cut staff in the wake of a business slowdown, especially in the technology sector.

By Kevin McCauley

PR firms came off their “post-pandemic high” in 2023 as they were forced to cut staffs in the wake of a business slowdown, especially in the technology sector.

Edelman, Weber Shandwick, Ketchum, Zeno Group and BCW were among the big firms to lay off people in 2023.



Looking ahead to 2024, PR firms will wrestle with the “anti-woke” pushback against ESG programming and seek to harness the power of AI to bolster productivity.

They will operate in a media environment that will be fixated on the presidential campaign and potential return to power of Donald Trump.

Here are some of the PR highlights of 2023.

Publicis Groupe sells Qorvis Communications to a management team led by longtime executive Matt Lauer. The French firm acquired DC-based Qorvis in 2014 when it was the tenth largest PR firm in O'Dwyer's rankings.



Donna Imperato

BCW CEO Donna Imperato announces resignation after a 25-year run at the WPP unit.

Teneo shells out \$80 million for Tulchan Communications, financial/IR shop with more than 80 staffers in London and Singapore.

Hope Hicks, who was Donald Trump's PR guru, counsels Madison Square Garden after criticism that the “world's most famous arena” uses facial recognition technology to ban legal foes from attending events.

Kate Bedingfield, White House Communications Director, exits her post, which is filled by Ben LeBolt, partner at Bully Pulpit Interactive.

Kekst CNC provides crisis counsel to Adani Group, the India-based conglomerate accused of fraud and stock market manipulation by Hindenburg Research. Adani denies any wrongdoing.

Brunswick Group takes Concordia, the storied investment bank of the Rothschild

family, private.

The New York City Dept. of Public Health gathers proposals for a strategic communications campaign to advance its agenda and respond to the elevated interest in public health.

Public Policy Holding Company spends \$22 million for Alexandria-based Multi-state Associates, a local and state government relations shop with 77 professionals.



Tom Suozzi

Tom Suozzi, former Queens/Long Island Congressman, joins Actum as co-Chair after launching an unsuccessful primary challenge to New York Governor Kathy Hochul. He returns to the political arena by running for his old House seat that was occupied by the disgraced George Santos.

APCO Worldwide scoops up Ga-gen MacDonald, the 25-year-old Chicago-based organizational communications engagement specialist. Maril MacDonald continues to run the firm as a subsidiary of APCO.

The Alaska Permanent Fund Corp., which was formed in 1980 to manage and invest the state's energy revenues, budgets \$600,000 for a PR search.

Growth slows at independent PR firms as O'Dwyer's releases rankings showing 18.2 percent growth in 2022, compared to a 29.7 percent advance in 2021.

Spain's LLYC doubles the size of its U.S. staff to more than 65 professionals via the acquisition of an 80 percent stake in BAM, San Diego firm that focuses on the technology and venture capital segments, for \$13.2 million.

California earmarks \$3.8 million for a strategic communications campaign to warn residents about the dangers of exposure to intense heat and wildfire smoke.

Dentons Global Advisors hires Tim Mulvey, who was Communications Director for the House Select Committee to Investigate the Jan. 6th Attack on the US Capitol.

KKR, private equity giant, buys 30 percent stake in FGS Global, a transaction that values the financial PR/crisis communications firm in the \$1.4 billion range.

Ogilvy Government Relations signs on

to represents St. Louis-based Peabody Energy, which is America's No. 1 coal producer.

Tourism Ireland, which was established 25 years ago as part of the Good Friday Agreement, scouts for a global PR partner to promote travel to the entire island. A key priority is to develop the tourism potential of Northern Ireland.

Margot Edelman, a 12-year veteran of the No. 1 independent firm, is named General Manager of the flagship New York office. She is the daughter of CEO Richard Edelman.

Subject Matter, D.C.-based advocacy shop, merges with Kivvit, No. 18 in O'Dwyer's 2022 rankings with \$39.5 million in fee income. Coral Tree Partners, Los Angeles-based private equity firm, acquired Subject Matter in 2022.

ICR bolsters its technology and mobility PR segments with the acquisition of Lumina Communications, the San Jose-based firm with more than 40 staffers and 50+ clients.

America's trust in news organizations improved somewhat, according to a report from market research firm YouGov. It's a rare bit of good news for the embattled media.

Ex-New York City Congressman Max Rose joins Oaktree Solutions as Managing Director for federal and international affairs. Frank Carone, who was Chief of Staff for NYC Mayor Eric Adams founded Oaktree.



Max Rose

Leidar, a Geneva-based firm, expands in the U.S. market by acquiring LEVICK, the Washington public affairs and crisis firm that was founded by the late Richard Levick.

BCW recruits Corey duBrowa, VP-Global Communications and PA at Google and its Alphabet parent as CEO. He takes over for Donna Imperato.

CNN bounces CEO Chris Licht after publication of a hard-hitting 15,000-word article that ran in The Atlantic chronicling the meltdown of the cable channel and its disastrous Donald Trump town hall meeting.

— Continued on next page

The Senate opens an investigation into the planned merger of Saudi Arabia's LIV Golf with the PGA Tour.

TikTok signs up former Walt Disney Chief Communications Officer Zenia Mucha as Chief Brand and Communications Officer. She also was a top advisor to former New York Governor George Pataki and senator Al D'Amato.

Edelman cuts 240 staffers, or four percent of its workforce, to cope with the cooling down of the PR sector. The firm had added 25 percent more staff from January 2021 to June 2022 to deal with its heady post-pandemic growth.

Tech slump wallops WPP as CEO Mark Read halves 2023 growth forecast to 1.5 percent. Technology, which accounts for 18 percent of WPP's revenues, slipped 4.9 percent during the first six months of 2023.

Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal sends a letter to Teneo CEO Paul Keary asking for information about the role that it played in Saudi Arabia's bankrolling of the LIV/PGA Tour deal.



BCW buffs image of Abu Dhabi's Environmental Agency, which wants to be known as the top environmental regulator in the Middle East.

Mark Thompson, former Director-General of the BBC and CEO of the New York Times Co., becomes chairman/CEO of embattled CNN.

Bill Daley, Vice Chairman for Public Affairs of Wells Fargo, announces plans to retire at the end of 2023. The former Chief of Staff to President Barack Obama was in charge of Wells Fargo's government relations, corporate communications, branding and community relations, as well as the bank's foundation.

Bari Rafferty, the former CEO of Ketchum and communications/brand lead at Wells Fargo, joins Morrow Sodali stakeholder engagement and ESG consulting firm as CEO of the Americas, a new position.



Trident DMG, the Washington-based strategic communications firm, signs on to support the Blue and White organization's pro-democracy push in Israel.

ICR acquires London's Consilium Strategic Communications, healthcare and investor relations firm, to gain its first on-the-ground presence in Europe.

Rupert Murdoch, 92, decides to step

down as chairman of Fox Corp. and News Corp. and take the chairman emeritus title at both companies. Son and Fox CEO Lachlan congratulated dad on his "remarkable" 70-year career.

Switzerland's Team Farner adds London's Lansons to its lineup of 16 integrated shops throughout Europe. Lansons co-Founders Tony Langham and Clare Parsons will remain in their posts.



Morrow Sodali picks up Powerscourt, which is based in London and Dublin. Powerscourt focuses on financial and capital market communications, corporate campaigning, ESG matters and

political affairs.

PR slips at Omnicom as its Fleishman-Hillard, Ketchum, Porter Novelli, Mercury and Marina Maher Communications units post a decline in Q3 revenues.

Americans are following the news less closely than they used to, according to a study from the Pew Research Center. Pew describes about 20 percent of Americans are casual news consumers, following the news on a "only now and then" basis.



Andrew Garson

Ex-MWWPR and Catalyst executive Andrew Garson pled guilty to charges that he defrauded his former em-

ployers of millions of dollars and agreed to pay \$3.8 million in restitution.

C Street Advisory Group handles the high-profile Chapter 11 filing of WeWork, which fell victim to the work-from-home trend and high office lease costs.

Hill + Knowlton hires Tara Singh, a former Aide to former British prime minister David Cameron, as he returns to political life as the UK's foreign secretary. Singh heads H&K's UK public affairs offering.

Reevermark signs on again with Nelson Peltz's Trian Fund Management as it resumes efforts to shake up Walt Disney Company's board of directors at the 2024 annual meeting.

MWW Group settles its federal suit alleging that it violated the False Claims Act by taking a second loan of \$2 million from the Paycheck Protection Program to which it was not entitled. Firm agrees to pay the US \$2.29 million plus interest; the fee includes a \$229,000 outlay to a whistleblower who is unaffiliated with MWW and the federal government.



Manuel Rocha

LLYC cut ties with Manuel Rocha, the 73-year-old former American diplomat who has been charged with spying for Cuba. He was working as a Senior International Business Advisor for LLYC at the time of his Dec. 4 arrest.

Vivendi is considering splitting into three separate companies, a move that would result in making the Havas ad/PR business a publicly traded company. ○

Customer engagement rises in 2023

By Steve Barnes

An increased emphasis on marketing and developing digital channels led to higher levels of customer engagement over the past year, according to the newly released Global Marketing Engagement Index 2023 from Team LEWIS.

That rise made up for a rather lackluster 2022, resulting in some of the highest scores since the index was first released in 2017. In four key areas—media, digital marketing, CSR/ESG and company culture), MET (Marketing Engagement Tracker—scores rose, often by considerable margins.

In media, engagement rates more than doubled, going from 34.6 percent in the 2022 index to 70.1 percent in this year's edition. For digital marketing, the jump was from 46.9 percent to 64.8 percent. CSR/ESG (56 percent to 68 percent) and company culture (70.9 percent to 75.2 percent) also showed healthy gains.

However, all of the resources expended on

reaching out has resulted in a few problems, the study finds. Primary among them: site security, which tumbled from 79.9 percent in 2022 to 63.9 percent in the new index. Website performance (48.4 percent to 45.9 percent) and UX (61 percent to 603 percent) also took minor hits.

The study authors offer a few strategies to combat those slides: "Consolidating digital growth. Tackling cybersecurity shortcomings. Design experiences with every user in mind. The prioritization of these actions will not only avoid disillusion on the part of consumers, but help prevent security breaches."

Teas LEWIS's study examined the top 300 companies from the "Forbes Global 2000: The World's Largest Public Companies" list. The scores were compiled between Sept. 20 and Oct. 31. ○

Data tells the crisis story

How data gives crisis communicators insight into what's around the corner.

By Maura Farrell and Patrick Kerley

What's the secret to managing a reputational crisis? Having great instincts, communication skills and the ability to see around corners can help. Increasingly, however, it's also knowing how to harness the power of data and insights.

For CEOs, CMOs, CCOs and General Counsels who are on the spot when something goes wrong, data can be a critical instrument. Data informs and inspires confidence in decision-making and reassures executives with hard-to-budge points of view. It can reinforce a gut instinct, or push back against assumptions, leading to a different, better strategy.

When is the best time to turn to data and insights in a crisis? All the time. This means creating a plan in advance that's rooted in data that can be rolled out quickly, drawing on data in real-time as a crisis unfolds and using data to inform future situations.

Here's how data, analysis and actionable insights can be integrated into the three phases of crisis communications.

Phase 1: before the crisis

Creating a data-informed preparedness plan starts with monitoring the brand, its issues and stakeholder opinion through online conversations and media content. Who's doing the talking on X (formerly Twitter)? What's the context? How much engagement does that news outlet get online?

Common themes and insights will emerge, creating robust benchmarks that can inform decision-making and provide needed context when an issue arises. In addition, identifying the influential voices in the brand's space and building proactive relationships with them allows for faster outreach and a greater chance of being heard.

That covers some of the basics: The data sources public relations experts and marketers think about every day. But there are more. This is also the best time to identify alternative data sources. Take a look at all the inputs, from call center reports to website product reviews. Understanding what's happening in these channels can help gauge the situation on the ground and lead to a more strategic response. For instance, identifying the most common questions people ask customer service can help a company understand an emerging issue and proactively address it—avoiding crisis—or translate into social media posts hitting at the biggest public concerns if a situation escalates publicly.

Also useful is pulling data that reveals how others have managed crises, for better or worse. Analyzing what's available publicly about a peer's or competitor's recent crisis provides important intel into understanding tactics that worked—messages, spokespeople, content formats—and how key constituencies responded and organized. Avoid their mistakes and learn from their successes to help shorten the recovery period for the brand.

Use these takeaways from across information sources to build scenarios and pre-determine decision points and when to escalate response. Most are familiar with *qualitative* factors like an executive being attacked or a video of a malfunctioning product. But, using this data, it's also possible to apply *quantitative* factors—how many followers does an influencer have or how many more times was a topic mentioned more than normal—to help gauge reaction.

Finally, use this phase to build consensus internally that data is important and the communications team is prepared to use it to provide counsel. Mid-crisis is the wrong time to familiarize other stakeholders with data and the signals it creates. Be transparent about how data is being captured, analyzed and utilized to ensure smoother decision-making in the moment.

Phase 2: in the midst of a crisis

As a crisis unfolds, providing clear, understandable and actionable insights is key. The challenges to this seemingly simple task are myriad: The data comes too fast and is unstructured, facts shift, internal expectations for updates come too often, and more. Answering these needs often requires different “sizes” of monitoring, analysis and reporting.

At the high level, real-time dashboards provide the ability to visually inspect data and detect general trends: changes in conversation volume, top themes and most influential voices. These can be helpful in the hands of a seasoned team that has experience with the specific issue or crisis communications in general and understands the context and general lifecycle of issue management.

While dashboards can help keep the pressure for real-time data in check, detailed analysis by an experienced insights team is critical. For example, volume of conversation isn't always enough to know how a crisis is evolving. Often, online engagement

consists of sharing headlines without going much deeper. An assessment of the level and tone of the original commentary, and if speculation and misinformation are being spread, can be stronger signals of the public's true investment in an issue.

As the data unfolds, the next step is to evaluate the best ways to respond, whether prioritizing media outreach or suggesting the best channels or influencers on social media. In crisis, go to where your audience is getting information and the conversation is happening. Monitoring for activity, then reaching out in the same thread or platform, can help address concerns quickly and advance a response. This may require a mix of media channels—earned, paid, owned, etc.—that you don't traditionally use. What's most important is to identify how and where to best reach your audience.

Phase 3: post-crisis

Often, new data emerges during the post-crisis phase, so it's important to continue monitoring, evaluating and reporting. This has the side benefit, too, of helping to reassure executives that their CMO or CCO is still mindful and on top of the issue. The vehicle for ongoing reporting is an impact report that evaluates the crisis; data from these reports can help identify new ways to respond in the future.

Another tactic is a tracking poll, which allows regular check-ins on brand reputation as it relates to key issues like quality, safety and customer experience. This allows anticipation of future threats and provides insights on how and where to proactively bolster the brand's reputation.

Finally, a data-driven crisis or reputation management plan needs to be a living, breathing document. Don't put it on a shelf; update it continuously with fresh insights, such as emerging social media platforms and influencers, new monitoring terms and by re-aligning on the triggers for escalation.

Refreshing the data and reexamining the plan regularly is also a way to get continued buy-in from stakeholders who aren't in marketing or communications. And it ensures that the next time a crisis hits, everyone's ready.

Maura Farrell is Managing Director at Subject Matter+Kivvit. Patrick Kerley is Senior Vice President at Subject Matter+Kivvit. **Q**



Maura Farrell



Patrick Kerley

You start the fire, we put it out.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS FOR
CRISES AND SPECIAL SITUATIONS

(212) 433-4600

WWW.REEVEMARK.COM



Better labor relations begin with AI

Negotiating a win-win requires familiarity with today's information feedback loop and an intimate knowledge of the other party's needs. Artificial intelligence delivers both.

By Eric Blankenbaker and Keisha McClellan

Call it the Year of Union Wins: 2023 saw UAW, SAG-AFTRA, Teamsters, airline pilots, healthcare workers, baristas, teachers and technicians win concessions from management. All told, some 453,000 workers walked off the job in 312 separate actions.

The fact that unions prevailed in 2023 makes it likely even more of them will strike in 2024.

But executives needn't fear the contest. By leveraging AI to analyze the other side, anticipate its demands and test-drive the strategy, executives can arrive at the bargaining table positioned to negotiate that rarest of outcomes, a deal that both labor unions and shareholders can celebrate.

We know this to be true because we helped America's bedrock brands secure win-wins in 2023. What we learned from our engagements promises to transform not just labor relations but also brand reputation management.

Let's break down the steps.

Understand the narrative

What's the story being told about your company? Who's telling it? How is it spreading? And who's listening?

Successful negotiations demand that, before entering them, you understand the narrative about your company. AI can help.

To give one manufacturer that awareness, we used AI models designed to detect risk to analyze the union's reach and impact on social as well as conventional media channels. We could then visualize the members, workers, activists and government officials following the union's spokesperson. We could see which influencers, reporters and bots were inclined to amplify his message and which of his messages got traction. We could also see which peripheral players were distorting those messages in the endless social and media feedback loop, as well as the channels they favored.

The relationships mapped by this analysis enabled us to develop a media strategy capable of ensuring our client's position was modified to meet the union narrative where it was. We advised them to allocate resources only to the channels and voices that key stakeholders already followed. Being able to discern network static from narrative substance, we focused our client on providing thoughtful responses and prevented sabotaging success by succumbing to provocation.

Perhaps most importantly, such an analysis equips us to defuse the spread of misinformation. In the wake of an environmental and safety incident, for example, AI-backed network analysis revealed that labor activists—not reporters—were spreading a tale of corporate greed, insisting that profits prevailed over employee safety. Social-media-savvy politicians were quick to exploit this narrative to advance their agendas with key constituencies. Cable-news outlets then played up the partisan exchanges on Twitter.

By knowing exactly who stood to benefit from contentious labor relations, we could anticipate where disinformation was most likely to crop up and deploy a position that acknowledged the concerns being raised and put into place corrective actions before the false narratives could destabilize upcoming negotiations.

Know the other side

Every negotiator hopes to bargain from a position of strength. That means knowing exactly who you're dealing with ahead of time. What motivated workers to collectivize? What advantages to membership do they see—and what disadvantages? And perhaps most importantly: What will they consider a huge win coming out of the next negotiation?

Despite the highly publicized nature of New Labor's demands, the answers to these questions aren't always obvious. AI can take out the guesswork.

For example, we've used AI to help clients predict critical issues in upcoming labor negotiations. In one case, after conducting a thorough analysis of social chatter and media coverage about healthcare benefits, the tool revealed that paid sick leave was a hot-button issue. In what both the union and our client considered a win, workers walked away with what they came for: paid sick leave.

Test-drive your narrative

Successful negotiations ultimately rely on the relationship between management and labor and, by extension, the community where employees live. AI can't cure a toxic relationship. However, it can help maintain respectful and constructive relations by ensuring that unwelcome news is delivered as sensitively as possible.

We saw this happen when a client closed a long-standing facility that had a significant positive impact on its community. Compa-

ny leaders sought to justify the closing of it by appealing to employees' sense of reason: The facility was old, and upgrading it would be prohibitively expensive, so the most financially sound thing to do was close it.

We didn't need AI to tell us this was the wrong approach to take. If the pandemic taught us anything, it's that emotion—not facts—shapes public perception. But which emotional appeal was likeliest to soften the blow and stave off unwanted publicity? The plant had a strong union and a long history of labor activism. Workers were anxious about their options and fearful about the future of their community. Moreover, with a reputation for valuing its employees, the company had engendered high worker expectations.

The communications approach we deployed succeeded in de-escalating the situation for three reasons:

1. We put ourselves in the shoes of the affected workers and members of the community, drawing on their experience to create several different versions of the announcement.

2. We made sure their language and tone affirmed the values that the company so publicly stood for.

3. By using learnings from our AI models to forecast their impact, we selected the version of the announcement that landed with the least damaging impact.

Level the playing field

The rise of New Labor can be attributed to its use of both grassroots organizing tactics and digitally savvy media manipulation.

But with AI, even old-school executives can rise to the challenges posed by lightning-speed information transfer and viral feedback loops—both online and within the halls of the company. With AI-guided media analysis, leaders can not only see what labor is saying but also tailor their communications strategies to use the same machinery



Eric Blankenbaker



Keisha McClellan

— Continued on page 19



Risk aversion in crisis media relations

Playing the odds, weighing the risks and adapting media relations strategies to meet the moment during times of crisis.

By Liz Janisse, Jonah Pitkowsky and Tom Becker

From supply chain breakdowns and ransomware attacks to employee misconduct and reputational challenges, crises of all nature tend to attract attention from one particularly influential group of stakeholders: the fourth estate.

The importance of how an organization shows up in media coverage during times of crisis can't be overstated. With media coverage heavily influencing public perception, the impact on your bottom line is clear: Share values can rise and fall with a single headline.

So, when a crisis hits and you're staring down an influx of inbound media inquiries, your media response strategy can't lose sight of the big picture.

Whether running interference against a barrage of press requests or navigating an in-depth look from an investigative reporter, it's important for legal and communications professionals to have a clear picture of the top priorities that are likely to dictate your media relations strategy, and ultimately, how you tell your company's story when it matters most.

You can never have too many friends

Journalists wield a great deal of influence with the potential to serve as incredibly valuable partners for communications professionals. At times, however, corporate leaders are hesitant to engage with media partially out of discomfort with uncertainty. Ultimately, it's an art and not a science. Though some media engagement opportunities come with their own challenges and constraints, by and large, building relationships with reporters—including before a crisis strikes—is critical to the management of your organization's reputation.

To meaningfully invest in relationships with journalists, it's vital to understand the day-to-day realities that drive their work. Pressure to meet deadlines, oversight from editors and difficulty reaching parties for comment are realities of the job that often put reporters in a challenging spot and can impact the tone and nature of both your interactions and their reporting.

When communications professionals are attuned to the needs of journalists—particularly in times of crisis—their engagement tends to yield strong, more balanced media coverage. This engagement comes in many

forms, including the simplest effort of letting a reporter know you received their inquiry.

Your approach here will likely set the tone moving forward, which brings us to another consideration ...

What to say when you can't say anything at all

Any communications professional will tell you that the words "no comment" are loaded with implicit meaning and often exemplify an evasive media relations posture. While legal or other confidentiality constraints often render companies unable to comment on a particular matter, how exactly you communicate that inability to comment in your conversations with journalists makes a difference.

While sometimes ignoring a press inquiry may buy the company more time to weigh its options and assess the outcome of the final article, the relationship impact can be significant. Any marginal difference in the resulting storyline doesn't outweigh the opportunity cost of walking away from a valuable journalist relationship. At worst, such a move could make you and your communications advisors look disorganized or inattentive, a perception that could stop reporters from taking a collaborative approach in the future.

Journalists operate in a competitive environment in which the first to publish or get a great scoop matters. Responding to one outlet and not another, or failing to take care of your local and trade reporters once national reporters swoop in, are critical missteps that could impact their willingness to engage with you down the line.

Two-way street: request for comment

Though media relations is undoubtedly more of an art than a science, we rely on journalistic ethical standards and protocols from top outlets to set a clear standard of what's expected from reporters covering our organizations. Media outlets often require reporters to give all parties referenced in a story the equal opportunity to comment. But doesn't the door swing both ways?

We're frustrated when a reporter fails to give us the chance to comment but is also quick to ignore emails when it stands to benefit our position in the resulting sto-

ry. If we refrain from commenting, will it make us a smaller part of the story? Without our input, can the story be substantiated enough to even go to press?

Oftentimes, the short-term gain—seeing a published story before deciding if a statement from you must be part of an updated version—keeps us from seeing the more valuable big picture: the significance of meeting journalists with professional courtesy to lay the foundation for lasting relationships.

While each media inquiry will need to be evaluated in its own light, taking into account factors like deadline, outlet, reporter, topic, timing and tone, we need to embrace the opportunity to treat journalists the way we want to be treated: confirming receipt of inquiries, letting them know proactively when we need to pass on offering a statement and opening rather than closing lines of communication.

Next time your organization finds itself in crisis, consider the long-term implications of your crisis media relations strategy with an emphasis on the value of:

- Maintaining and nurturing relationships with journalists.
- Thoughtfully communicating a non-response during times of crisis, and ...
- Appreciating media outreach for what it is: a chance for your organization's voice to be heard when it matters most.

Liz Janisse is a Director, Jonah Pitkowsky is a Consultant and Tom Becker is a Senior Managing Director on FTI Consulting's Crisis & Litigation Communications team based in New York. ○



Liz Janisse



Jonah Pitkowsky



Tom Becker



We need to tell our story! Our reputation is at stake!

We need a bipartisan team to help us navigate DC!

THIS LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR ROKK SOLUTIONS!

When bad news happens and your reputation is at stake, ROKK Solutions is the trusted partner you can call to navigate the toughest challenges. Our bipartisan Crisis Concierge team of veteran communicators and strategists brings decades of government, media and corporate experience to the table – and we get results.

When you need crisis communications assistance, the ROKK Solutions team will be there to answer your call.



2020 K Street NW, #510,
Washington, D.C. 20006
Email us at info@rokksolutions.com
ROKKSOLUTIONS.COM

Building reputational resilience

Why being prepared to withstand crises before they hit is just as important as the crisis response itself.

By Kelsey Eidbo and Clay Steward

The October 7 Hamas attack on Israel and the subsequent Israeli invasion of Gaza reminded many businesses that reputation-impacting events are often well outside of their control. But how they respond—or don't—can quickly cement their reputation in many stakeholders' eyes. Whether you plan for it or not, reputational challenges are coming for you, and ignoring them isn't an option.

There's no shortage of reputational risks that businesses face, and in our digitally connected yet highly polarized society, responding thoughtfully and authentically to these risks can mean the difference between a full-blown crisis and an opportunity for stakeholders to see your values and exceptional leadership. These situations demand skilled communications strategists, an established response plan, coordinated deployment of thoughtful messaging across channels and a diverse, collaborative team that can protect against blind spots.

But that's not what this article is about. The habits an organization needs to develop before a crisis hits require as much attention as the crisis response itself. We believe these behaviors come together to build reputational resilience that can have an outsized impact on how companies ultimately weather and rebound from a crisis.

Prepare for heightened public scrutiny

Corporate reputations are under attack from every direction and need to be built sturdier than ever. Public criticism of evasive, incomplete or inauthentic responses to the Hamas-Israel war is just the latest example. Tomorrow, it may be environmental activists bringing attention to missed ESG goals. And the day after that, it could be consumer groups blasting an organization's halting and inconsistent response to a data breach.

But while no organization is flawless or immune from criticism, not all companies are equally vulnerable to a full-blown crisis. Some have carefully cultivated a reputational foundation built to withstand heightened scrutiny. Building a strong reputation takes more than manipulating brand image and public perception. It's an exercise in corporate self-improvement, doing the work and embracing the behaviors that lead internal and external stakeholders to reach their own positive perception of your company and its leaders.

Too often, this point gets lost in conversations about crisis management. No doubt, navigating through the eye of the storm is crucial. But successful outcomes, particularly over the long term, are usually a result of the preparation undertaken in the preceding weeks, months and years. We refer to this as reputational resilience.

When facing a crisis, many organizations may feel that they have to work with the cards they're dealt. But they fail to realize—or conveniently ignore—that their reputation is largely within their control, and as a result, so is the lasting impact of that situation. People will develop their perception of your company based on the information you proactively put out into the world. If the public is misinformed, or your positive behaviors are hidden, people can come to an incorrect conclusion about who you are and what you stand for. In other words, a durable counternarrative makes it less likely for a criticism to stick. Show your audience what you believe now so that later, when the going gets tough, they have evidence of not only your good intentions but your integrity as well.

One major sticking point for some companies is humility. Managing perception requires organizational self-awareness. Nothing torpedoes a business more quickly than blatant dishonesty and stubborn resistance to candor and transparency. This means having tough conversations, acknowledging where you can do better, understanding and living your core values and being candid when you fail to uphold them. For those who do, weathering a crisis is more manageable.

Build organizational awareness with words and action

"The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear," said Socrates. But corporations today are too often more concerned about what they say than what they do.

For instance, "corporate values" too often amount to making public statements or putting words on a website. Yes, those messages are important. But companies can't speak their values into existence. They must make sure those values are widely understood within the company to ensure that team members will actually adopt behaviors to advance those values. And this work begins well before any crisis scenario rears its head.

Authenticity means the alignment of what one thinks, says and does. Corporate values are the touchstone by which we evaluate the authenticity of an organization's crisis response. Making overly ambitious or vague statements about societal issues that a company can't meaningfully affect isn't authentic. It might even be damaging if the media or other stakeholders call it out. Similarly, pushing out bold public pronouncements that aren't reflected in past behaviors will feel to your stakeholders like manipulation.

Those risks are why reputational management needs to be systematized and cross-functional. As NYU Stern School of Business professor Alison Taylor has argued, the communications team can't be the sole proprietor of the values function at a company. "We seem to have developed this view that taking a public position is somehow an end in itself," she recently said on Boston University's *Crux of the Story* podcast. "We cannot treat communications as divorced from what the company is actually doing."

Tell stories that communicate values

While we want to emphasize behavior over talk, we're not arguing that communicating values is unimportant. On the contrary: it's essential, but it has to be done in the right way. And the most effective tool for that task is a story. Stories are where behaviors and messaging meet.

Neuroscience supports the effectiveness of stories. It shows our minds aren't especially adept at processing and internalizing complex data and facts. But we are good at remembering stories.

Berkeley Haas School of Business professor David Aaker has published research on the effectiveness of "signature stories" that can highlight a company's organizational values and inspire employees and customers. These stories often feature a hero—a customer or employee—who acts in a way that helps define the company's mission or ethos.

These stories can play an important role in rebounding from a crisis. In his book "Creating Signature Stories," Aaker cited the ex-



Kelsey Eidbo



Clay Steward

— Continued on next page

Disinformation remains top concern for Americans

Americans view disinformation as one of the top societal issues facing the country—and even view it as a more pressing threat than border security, climate change, terrorism and other critical issues.

By Jon Gingerich

The American public has grown increasingly concerned about disinformation and the role it plays in political polarization as well as the threats it poses to our elections and democracy, according to a report from the Institute for Public Relations.

The IPR report, which asked Americans about their perceptions of disinformation's impact on society, found that nearly two-thirds (61 percent) of respondents now consider misinformation and disinformation as a major issue and a more pressing threat than other noteworthy concerns such as border security (57 percent), the budget deficit (56 percent), climate change (55 percent), domestic terrorism (44 percent) and international terrorism (43 percent).

Four in 10 respondents (40 percent) said they see disinformation almost every day, while a third (33 percent) said they encounter it at least once a week.

Americans still don't consider disinformation our single biggest threat—at least not yet. The issues currently considered to be the top problems facing Americans today are inflation (73 percent), healthcare

costs (72 percent), crime (71 percent) and gun violence (68 percent).

Three-quarters (75 percent) of Americans believe that disinformation undermines our election process, and a similar number (74 percent) consider it a threat to our democracy. Others think disinformation will increase the polarization of political parties (73 percent) and that it also infringes on human rights (61 percent).

Americans also think the spread of artificial intelligence will only further accelerate disinformation's deleterious effect on society: More than half (55 percent) of respondents believe that AI platforms will be responsible for disseminating even more disinformation in the future.

Most Americans believe that social media platforms are to blame for the majority of the disinformation that the public sees today. The top three social media platforms seen as being at least "somewhat" responsible for spreading disinformation are Facebook (73 percent), TikTok (65 percent) and X (formerly Twitter) (62 percent). Other offenders deemed at least "somewhat" responsible for spreading disinformation include

politicians from the respondent's opposing party (68 percent), political activist groups (67 percent) and foreign governments such as the Chinese government (66 percent) and the Russian government (66 percent).

When it comes to who bears the responsibility in combating disinformation, most Americans primarily view it as a role for the U.S. government (62 percent) or President Biden (60 percent). Various federal agencies, cable news companies, newspapers, Congress and journalists followed (all at 58 percent).

While Americans appear leery about others' ability to discern truth from fiction, they seem particularly confident in at least one party's ability to weed out disinformation: themselves. When asked what source combats disinformation in the media at least "somewhat well," 65 percent said "me," followed by an additional 60 percent who said "people like me."

IPR's annual "Disinformation in Society Report" was based on a survey of more than 2,000 Americans between July and August. Research was conducted by polling and marketing research firm Leger. ○

BUILDING REPUTATIONAL RESILIENCE

Continued from page 18

ample of Barclays Bank, which had taken a reputational hit following news of an interest-rate rigging scandal. To regain the trust Barclays lost with the public, it announced a new purpose: "Helping people achieve their mission—in the right way." It also developed stories featuring individuals who benefited from the bank's new initiatives, which ultimately helped rebuild trust with the public. If developing those storytelling muscles hadn't been a priority, it's not clear that Barclays would've been as successful in weathering this crisis.

But powerful stories are helpful not just when attempting to rehabilitate corporate reputation after a crisis; they're even more impactful—and likely to be perceived as authentic—when nurtured and shared before a crisis ever hits. If people know you're operating with integrity, making a positive impact and treating your people and consumers well, they'll be far less likely to interpret one bad act or messaging mistake as indicative of a toxic or negligent corporate culture.

Crafting impactful stories isn't easy, of

course. Identifying your audience should be step one. Prioritizing internal audiences with these stories is essential. Energized and inspired employees can be among the most effective brand ambassadors. Those stories can also prepare employees to navigate crises by reminding them of the company's core values.

Show vulnerability and courage

Trust is one of the most precious commodities in business today. In industries where customers can take their business away with less friction than ever, trust can be the difference between a company staying in business or going under. To maintain trust, leaders must be ready to acknowledge when their company's actions fail to match their values.

Showing vulnerability isn't a weakness. Often, it's a sign of strength that can have several benefits. For one, it helps build trust with employees, customers and other stakeholders. It also helps foster open dialogue internally. Employees who know they can admit mistakes are more likely to share and correct them rather than hide or defend them.

For many, showing vulnerability isn't natural. That's especially true in a crisis, where

the default reaction is a defensive crouch. But this rarely engenders trust. Like any other habit, showing courage and vulnerability takes practice. But the more you do it, the more it will pay off when it counts.

Kelsey Eidbo and Clay Steward are Vice Presidents with Infinite Global and members of the firm's Crisis and Litigation PR group. ○

BETTER LABOR RELATIONS WITH AI

Continued from page 14

labor uses to reach their supporters. With intelligence on peripheral actors, companies can anticipate and mitigate collateral damage. With insight into labor's primary motivations and existential needs, companies can enter negotiations prepared to address them, increasing the likelihood of success.

Knowledge is power. With AI, management can better understand precisely what it needs to meet a newly empowered labor movement where it stands and on equal footing.

Eric Blankenbaker is an Executive Vice President at Weber Shandwick. Keisha McClellan is a Vice President at Weber Shandwick. ○

Three ways to engage employees in a noisy year

Labor strikes, employee revolts at OpenAI, Israel, Ukraine and an election year. In 2024, businesses will need to rethink how they leverage and engage their people or risk a crisis.

By Jackson Hayes and Ryan Toohey

In 2023, employees showed they could have influence. Consider the whirlwind Thanksgiving week at OpenAI, where Sam Altman was fired as CEO only to have employees threaten to resign en masse. Instead of Altman leaving, employees influenced investors to sack the entire board of directors instead. Setting aside OpenAI's unique organization, when was the last time employees replaced an entire board?

One of the lessons for communicators and executives is employees can be an asset—or a risk if you don't take heed. But if you understand your people and communicate effectively, you can move companies and industries.

The employee power trend

The OpenAI experience is part of a larger pattern of labor's power—real or perceived—that will need to be managed in 2024 as the U.S. presidential and other elections grip the world.

Auto strikes have long been a classic example of labor power. In 2023, the UAW orchestrated strikes at the Big 3. However, this time President Biden and former President Trump both showed support for workers, sensing a political advantage, showing yet again it's not safe to champion traditionally liberal causes in a blue state or conservative ones in red states. Those distinctions aren't relevant today with multigenerational employee bases, polarization and changing expectations of one's relationship with work.

It's not just politics though. In 2023, "employee rights" issues reached investors as groups representing union interests pushed proxy proposals asking investors to tell many non-unionized companies to adopt "neutrality" policies restricting companies' ability to communicate with their people about certain issues, including labor organizing efforts. These proposals were poorly understood by advisory agencies, with Glass Lewis and ISS recommending in favor of many on the grounds of there being reputational risk to discussing unions.

Enter cause fatigue and backlash

The pandemic produced all sorts of employee activism and brought to light questions regarding the role business should have in shaping societal norms. This led to companies feeling pressured to take on a host of "political" positions, sometimes in haste and without understanding the implications.

Say you're a global brand with a heavy

digital, print and TV advertising footprint. It makes sense that you should have a communications style guide that reflects the best thinking on DE&I norms. But do you need to send that style guide to employees who have nothing to do with communications? Maybe, maybe not.

Some employees have responded to corporate stances by suggesting employers are telling them how to think. (e.g., "We're a plastics business. I get that we should talk about reducing pollution, but why do I care what my company thinks about Israel, Taiwan and Ukraine?") The anti-ESG crusade is one face of this backlash, but there's a Main Street reality to it for some: "Why can't I just go to work anymore?"

Demographics are, of course, part of the story. According to Gallup, "Younger adults are more likely than older adults to believe businesses should take a stance: 59 percent of those aged 18 to 29 think as much, compared with 51 percent of those aged 30 to 44, 41 percent of those aged 45 to 59, and 43 percent of those aged 60 and older. Asian and Black adults are the most likely of all racial/ethnic groups to believe businesses should take a public stance on political and social issues. About three-quarters of each group (74 percent and 72 percent, respectively) say businesses should take a public stance, compared with 49 percent of Hispanic adults and 41 percent of White adults."

However, 58 percent of consumers think it's inappropriate for companies to take a stand on social issues. So, what are you supposed to do?

The path forward

The first step is getting to know your people. Not the national polls. Not the trends you read about online. Know *your* customers and *your* employees.

Here are three options for thinking about how to communicate in 2024 and beyond.

Commit to having a voice—and be okay with being wrong. You may decide you want to shape the narrative. This might mean a busy year, but it could be worth it. Nike, as we know, saw its market cap increase after the decision to sponsor Colin Kaepernick (after an initial dip). Disney, meanwhile, continues to struggle after being labeled "woke." AB-InBev's stock price was up on the year despite the backlash against Bud Light. The key may be knowing who you are as a leadership team and

employee group and accepting what comes with it over time.

Identify priority issues you'll take a stance on. It can be good to take positions, but you need to know what matters to your people. Are you a bank or FinTech? Maybe it makes sense to announce you'll be taking stances only on issues related to access to small business loans and providing banking services in underserved communities. If you take this approach, you can focus on listening to your people and identifying, say, between two and five priority issues that the company will be leaders in.

Declare your neutrality. You can come out and state that your business is about the business and nothing more. You won't be taking political stances that aren't related to operations. This is an option, but again, you need to know your people well. It could be viewed as a shrewd decision to focus on what you can control. It could also be viewed as abdicating a leadership role in your community. In 2024, you'll also need to take a hard look at political causes your business and leaders support or risk appearing disingenuous. Home Depot, for instance, is facing backlash after it was said to have donated to Republicans who voted to overturn the 2020 election.

Whatever path you choose, each start with a few best practices:

Establish a cross-functional employee relations working group. This isn't just HR. It should have representatives from functional teams, legal, comms., government affairs, etc. The idea is to establish a team that has a holistic view of how your people are thinking and feeling about the business and understand what's coming down the pike. This can—and should!—be a part-time role. Start with something simple—say 30 minutes a week—and be willing to adapt. You're likely to find common threads of concern and opportunity.



Jackson Hayes



Ryan Toohey

— Continued on page 23

Impact those who matter most when it most matters.

Stakeholder Solutions

Strategic Communications

Risk Advisory

Crisis Management

TRIDENTDMG.COM



Not your grandfather's board of directors

Public corporate boards in the 21st Century need major change if they want to mitigate big risks in 2024.

By Mike Paul

In 2023, I provided risk management and corporate governance advice to several *Fortune* 100 boards of directors. Reputation Doctor LLC provides CEO and board advisory services to leading corporations. We've been a leader in mitigating corporate governance risk for many years.

A prime example of a hemorrhaging crisis in corporate governance is global cybersecurity risk. In 2023, a client and leading corporation had all members of its board of directors fill out revised paperwork regarding cybersecurity as a requirement for updating its D&O insurance policy. As we all know, cybersecurity risk continues to grow exponentially each year.

One leading independent director on this corporate board for 10 years had checked all the boxes as an expert in the cybersecurity portion of the D&O insurance paperwork. I just happened to be at the board meeting after giving a presentation minutes before on risk management issues. I asked Tom—I changed his name for confidentiality reasons—why he felt so comfortable checking all the boxes under cybersecurity as an expert. He quickly said, "Don't you remember that two-day cybersecurity conference we went to last year in Silicon Valley? I learned so much there!" I whispered in his ear that, in my professional opinion, being an expert meant a much deeper understanding of the cybersecurity field than two days as a conference participant. He quickly rushed to change his answers on the D&O insurance paperwork. Tom is also 82 years old. I mention this—with the risk of being called ageist—because I know Tom well and I knew he had little to no cybersecurity expertise and I also knew it would be crucial for the insurance company to have an accurate, truthful assessment of board expertise. I also know Tom isn't alone when it comes to fudging expertise on D&O insurance or stretching the truth in critical committee meetings as well as in full board meetings.

According to CrowdStrike—a global leader in cybersecurity—as most organizations focus on managing remote and hybrid teams, operationalizing years of digital transformation and navigating a highly uncertain global economy, adversaries and threat actors have become much more sophisticated, relentless and damaging in their cyberattacks. This includes global, cloud-computer infrastructures and file-

less cyberattacks on high-profile organizations with devastating consequences. As a result, there's certainly no room for stretching the truth, lying or spinning about cybersecurity experience on corporate boards of directors. The same holds true for other critical issues faced by boards including: digital transformation; environment, sustainability and governance; diversity, equality and inclusion; financial resilience; executive compensation; navigating ever-changing regulatory requirements and many other important issues where critical ethics and values are needed by each director on 21st century boards.

The paradigm for global business has changed post-pandemic and, in my professional opinion, the paradigm and ethical requirements for public corporate boards have changed significantly as well. 21st-century corporate boards of directors are not your grandfather's corporate board, because most global board issues have changed tremendously, for reasons including: yearly digital transformation, more dangerous global-threat actors (as well as the digital sophistication of today's global cyber threats), growing DEI issues as global demographics shift each year, crucial global ESG issues affecting our planet and our global community, constantly evolving global regulatory issues in many countries on six continents worldwide, complex global financial resilience issues in every sector of our changing world (now at war), and staggering global executive compensation issues.

In the past decade alone, I've actively helped more than two dozen former public corporate board directors step down from their board positions due to the growing list of corporate governance issues listed above. After counseling them successfully, these powerful, mostly white men wanted to hatch a plan to step down before being asked to leave. They also wanted to secure their legacy in leadership. My advice to most of them was to look more closely at the world today and look at what the world is predicted to look like in the next 10 years. I then asked them to compare that data to the data of their own enterprises worldwide. As they stepped down, they saw their own goal must be to match the demographics of their enterprise's shareholders and stakeholders, which many times was seeking to match the

demographics of the nation or the world in which the enterprise resided, operated and served. Much of our strategy and implementation was done stealthily. However, several of them wanted to do more. Several of these courageous white men wanted to help groom their replacements on the board and many times those new board replacements were highly-qualified women—including women of color—as well as many new and highly qualified men of color. It's important to also point out that all of these new—what many are now calling Next Gen—independent directors have been waiting for many seats on public corporate boards to open up to have their opportunities to add great value to corporate boards. In fact, many public corporate directors of color believe they have to be twice as good just to be nominated to join a public corporate board.

Why the change in the powerful white men I counseled? You see, these retiring and powerful board directors learned through humility and by studying important data and analytics that the world around them was changing quickly and they now wanted to be a part of something important for the future. They've witnessed concrete, personal examples of how the U.S. population has changed. They know that major cities began experiencing tipping-point change in the mid-'90s. (New York, for example, changed from being a white-majority population to a people-of-color majority population for the first time in history.) That was almost 30 years ago! Today, New York is comprised of almost three-fourths people of color. This requires new leadership to handle complex issues in our changing world. (By the way, this is also why calling people of color "minorities" in many cities today is no longer accurate.)

How is this relevant to the best practices approach for public corporate boards of directors? Well, I think it should be obvious, but let me explain. The goal of any enterprise is to seek to represent the demographics of which it resides, operates and serves. That includes shareholders and stakeholders—including employees, customers, partner organizations and suppliers—within an enterprise's footprint worldwide. This includes gender, race, culture, disabilities



Mike Paul

— Continued on next page

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

— Continued from page 22

and more in the breakdown of data. And this data is to be shared transparently with accountability for all to see. Sadly, many are still not doing so today. This is the best-practices approach to understanding what an enterprise is versus simply its logo, buildings, slogans, mottos or mission statement. A brand is truly a combination of all of the positives above, and its people—including its employees and all of its shareholders and stakeholders—are the most vital part. People are the heart, mind and soul of any brand. This is why DEI and ESG goals, data and mission are crucial. Oh, you can call them something else, but their essence and truth and importance in the coming years won't subside. DEI and ESG aren't about politics unless we allow politics to "trump" logic, science, truth, love and more, including our shareholders and stakeholders. By the way, this also includes our children and grandchildren, as well as other important values we're supposed to learn from and cherish at home and at work.

Again, how is this relevant to public corporate boards of directors? Well, when it comes down to it, public corporate boards have a long history of being highly exclusionary elite clubs of mainly white men. Sad, but true. So exclusionary, in fact, they left many out of the boardroom on purpose for generations. As a result, most public corporate boards are highly incomplete and they certainly don't ask all the right board questions to best help the enterprise com-

pete, grow and flourish.

In the past, for example, I counseled a board of directors regarding risk management and corporate governance issues for a major corporation that made mostly products for women. Their board of directors for most of the company's existence—generations—was made up of all white men. We had to quickly find the customer data to factually prove that not having women—including having women of color—on their board and in key leadership and staff positions worldwide was hurting the enterprise in many ways, and the color green—money—was waiting to be tapped with many more stakeholders and shareholders. Keeping people out isn't only clear prejudice but also unwise for a business enterprise.

McKinsey did a DEI study almost 10 years ago, and the critical results are even more valid today: Enterprises that seek to match the accurate and true demographics for which the enterprise resides, operates and serves—including all of its shareholders and stakeholders—on average make a third more in profits than those that don't. The study also, in my opinion, provided another fact: Those enterprises that don't embrace the McKinsey study's findings struggle with change, including moving

away from prejudice and racism. Why? Making more money should encourage every board and c-suite in the world to passionately embrace DEI goals from intern through board member, especially with the pressure for growth in sales on a quarterly basis by all.

In conclusion, public corporate boards seek to mitigate risk for the entire enterprise. In doing so, hopefully, boards would avoid doing anything negative that might result in a viral headline (or worse, result in a board director or several canceled publicly). Let's hope 2024 brings much better risk management and overall governance for corporate boards themselves, including a best practices approach to board succession planning and board refreshment. Why? Because public corporate boards of directors could face much more litigation and risk management governance issues in 2024. All 21st century public corporate boards should lean on core values, courage and ethics as opposed to faking it or fudging it along the way.

Mike Paul is CEO of Reputation Doctor, a leading, award-winning CEO and board advisory firm specializing in crisis communications, risk management and litigation communications. ReputationDoctor.com ○

WAYS TO ENGAGE EMPLOYEES

— Continued from page 20

Set up or refresh employee listening groups to help spot issues. Establish small teams, five to 20 people, placed around the business to give you the real picture. These individuals should be cross-generational and cross-level, but established and mature enough in their career to understand the importance of their role and the confidentiality of their role and discussions. They will inform the employee relations working group.

Train front-line leaders and communicators to see risks and opportunities they may not have seen before. Bring the issue to the attention of the employee relations team, which they should view as a resource, who can then make informed decisions.

Jackson Hayes is an Associate Partner and Ryan Toohey is a Partner at Dentons Global Advisors. ○



The Stevens Group facilitates mergers and acquisitions in the public relations and digital marketing industries. TSG represents both sellers and buyers. We help build bridges that create true synergy and cultural fit for buyers and sellers that meet the test of time.

 **THE STEVENS GROUP**
When Selling Your PR Firm Is A Growth Strategy

Art Stevens: 732-748-8583 Cell: 917-514-7980 • Rich Jachetti: 914-318-4656
656 Post Lane Somerset, NJ 08873 • www.theartstevensgroup.com

It's time for content marketers to get creative

PR and marketing departments are in the hot seat, as forecasts show that growth in advertising spend stalled in 2023 in the wake of cost-of-living increases and continued economic uncertainty. Here's how marketing and PR strategies can take advantage of today's diverse media landscape while matching advertising's results at a fraction of the cost.

By Judith Ingleton-Beer

Digital spending in the U.S. is facing its slowest growth rate in just over a decade—7.8 percent—and the UK's 2023 advertising spend growth has slowed to 0.5 percent. This is also coming at a time when the C-Suite is turning to PR and marketing departments for a higher return on investment as it starts to trust PR and marketing teams more than ever before.

With ad spending slowing, marketing looks to be on the receiving end of a greater portion of yearly budget cuts. So, what are the implications of this change in budget distribution and how can PR and marketing professionals adapt their tried-and-tested strategies to this new environment?

Maximize the content lifecycle with quality content

Almost two-thirds of B2B buyers believe corporate brand messaging is too vague to actively represent their brand and attract buyers. That means that placing quality on-message content strategy performance will now be under the spotlight.

B2B PR and marketing professionals need to extract new value for money and maximize the content lifecycle by telling creative stories, conducting research and utilizing SEO.

Creating quality content can open up a new avenue for media coverage, putting subject matter experts and company developments in as many targeted publications as possible without breaking the bank.

Earned media content is king

Earning quality media placements is key to saving on sponsored content and ad spending. Regardless of where spending is split between B2B PR and marketing strategies, one thing's clear: Making the most of earned media opportunities is essential.

Earned media, when combined with a trusted thought leader and quality content, can build significant trust and credibility—two components that are vital to the B2B sales funnel. As one door closes in editorial and ad spending, another opens in earned media opportunities. Now, more than ever, cost-effective PR and marketing strategies are top of the agenda, so B2B professionals can gain maximum brand exposure with minimum spend.

A strong brand reputation can't be bought, so use earned channels to your advantage! In today's diverse media landscape, B2B PR

and marketing professionals are no longer limited to printed media—it's all about digital publications, social media channels and blogs providing the optimal platform to raise brand awareness and connect directly with target audiences. Not an advertising penny in sight.

Look beyond the (digital) print horizon

As 32 percent of tech marketers designate the highest portion of their budgets to social media marketing, it's important for B2B marketers to take an in-depth audit of their social content performance and adjust strategies. But social media isn't the be-all and end-all; digital platforms can also include blogs, online publications and video posting sites.

With HubSpot estimating that the number of digital video viewers will hit 3.5 billion in 2023 and that people are watching, on average, 17 hours of online videos per week, audiences are more receptive to digital content. In fact, people are 52 percent more likely to share video content than any other type of content.

Earned video content marketing is a good avenue for B2B organizations to grow brand awareness and trust without breaking the bank. As the popularity of short-form video content rises, so has the quality of longer-form content, and an increase in platforms where it can be hosted. YouTube and LinkedIn are just two examples where users can freely post interactive and visually engaging content such as webinars and recorded Q&As, which can cater to exactly what a B2B organization needs.

Yes, video content marketing comes with an incredible amount of potential, but B2B PR and marketing professionals shouldn't ignore other tried-and-tested media formats such as podcasts, blog posts, infographics and SEO that together can complete the perfect digital content stack.

SEO brings it all home

With a LinkedIn study reporting that search engines, social media platforms and vendor websites make up the top three sources that B2B buyers look to for information, it's safe to say that SEO is a necessity.

Investment in SEO provides vital building blocks to build brand awareness, credibility and trust within key target audiences. As media outlets transition to most online platforms, take this opportunity to make

use of SEO and backlinks to increase digital lead generation and brand awareness. B2B organizations should focus on creating high-quality content, incorporating SEO-driven keywords and backlinks to drive traffic back to their own sites.

Content atomization—the formula for success

Making use of a powerful content stack strategy can illicit strong brand recall by incorporating a series of PR and marketing assets around one campaign topic, from a thought-leadership article to a corresponding blog and white paper on the company website to subsequent social-media posting.

Campaigns must be planned strategically, incorporating multiple content stacks to create a blend of carefully curated messaging. B2B PR and marketing professionals need to ensure that they can extract as many articles placed in as many target media outlets as possible, to consistently communicate the value of their solutions and service. This strategy ensures that prospects see key messages multiple times per week in the media. Then bring in those other elements of the content stack to hit prospects in keyword searches, website visits and social media browsing.

It's all about bringing together quality, SEO-optimized content on multiple platforms to ensure optimal ROI.

Content marketing proves its worth

In the wake of advertising spending cuts, marketers can continue to earn market gains for their clients by maximizing the content lifecycle to prove ROI and secure quality earned media placements, harness creativity to create high-converting content across a plethora of platforms, all while ensuring content is optimized for SEO purposes with keywords and backlinks to bring it all home. It's time to think creatively and not let money do all the talking.

As one door closes in advertising, another door opens for PR and marketing. Make sure you step through it.

Judith Ingleton-Beer is CEO of B2B communications group IBA International. ●



Judith
Ingleton-Beer



A global communications consultancy built on a legacy of crisis management

Leidar is a communications consultancy that helps clients set their course, navigate and engage stakeholders across the globe. For more than a decade, Leidar has helped corporate and NGO clients across Europe, Asia and the Middle East strategically leverage opportunities and withstand reputational challenges.

Our team of trusted advisors offers expertise across multiple industries and sectors with risk mitigation, crisis readiness, reputation management, corporate advisory, and issues advocacy.

Leidar USA is founded on the legacy of LEVICK Strategic Communications – a leader in corporate reputation and crisis communications for 25 years. The partnership between the two firms goes back a decade, and now together as Leidar we serve clients from the leading influence capitals of the world through four integrated practices:

Risk, Reputation and Crisis

Corporate Advisory

Public Affairs and Policy

ESG and Sustainability

Meet Leidar. Helping clients find their North Star through Leadership Navigation.

leidar.com **in Leidar**

WASHINGTON, DC

NEW YORK

LONDON

GENEVA

BRUSSELS

OSLO

DUBAI

SINGAPORE

Navigating the storm

Applying the RACI model to navigate even the most challenging crisis situations.

By Steve Halsey

In today's fast-paced, hyperconnected world, brands face a constant threat of crises that can harm their reputation and bottom line. From accidents to criminal acts, geopolitical uncertainty, cyberattacks, AI-driven phishing, misinformation, insider threats, activist investors and even the impact of climate change, it's more important than ever that organizations have a clear response framework in place—before things hit the proverbial fan.

As communications professionals, it's our responsibility to guide brands through these turbulent times and ensure their resilience in the face of adversity. To achieve this, we must adopt a strategic approach that not only takes into account the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders but also evaluates and ranks potential and actual crises on a range of factors such as probability, immediacy, priority and severity. In conjunction with establishing such a robust threat matrix, savvy communicators can also apply the RACI model as a game-changer in crisis planning and management.

The RACI model in crisis

The RACI model, which stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed, is a framework commonly used in project management to clarify roles and responsibilities. When adapted to crisis communications planning, it becomes a powerful tool to ensure everyone involved understands their part in effectively managing and mitigating crises.

Responsible (R): In crisis communications planning, identifying who is responsible for each aspect of the plan is crucial. This includes drafting messages, monitoring social media, coordinating with legal teams and more.

The Responsible individuals are the boots on the ground, actively executing the tasks required during a crisis. They need to be well-trained and ready to act swiftly. It's also important to build in some redundancies, with multiple people able to act if a responsible team member is unavailable.

Accountable (A): Accountability is the cornerstone of crisis management. This role typically falls to the senior leadership or crisis management team.

Accountable individuals ensure that the crisis communications plan is not only developed but also regularly updated and tested. They oversee the entire process and make critical decisions.

Consulted (C): Crisis communications planning should be a collaborative effort. The Consulted individuals are those who provide expertise and insights into specific areas of the plan.

This group may include legal advisors, subject matter experts and external consultants. Their input helps refine the plan and ensures legal and ethical compliance. To ensure the consultation is effective, there should be an established cadence of meetings, ideally on a quarterly basis.

Informed (I): Communication during a crisis isn't limited to external stakeholders. Internal communication is equally vital. The Informed individuals are those who need to be kept in the loop.

This group includes employees, board members, key department heads and other stakeholders who should be aware of the situation and the company's response.

Overlaying factors in the response matrix

While the RACI model establishes clarity in roles and responsibilities, it's also important to overlay a system for evaluating and rating crisis factors in a formalized manner. Such factors can include:

Probability: Assessing the likelihood of a crisis occurring is the first step in prioritizing resources and response efforts. Low-probability events may warrant a different approach than high-probability ones.

Immediacy: Some crises demand an immediate response, while others allow for more time to gather information and plan a strategic approach. Understanding the immediacy of a crisis helps in allocating resources effectively.

Priority: Not all crises are equal. Prioritizing crises based on their potential impact on the brand's reputation and business operations is essential.

Crisis severity, public safety concerns, legal implications and financial implications should all be considered when determining priority.

Severity: The severity of a crisis can vary widely. It's crucial to evaluate the potential consequences and impact (short- and long-term) on stakeholders of various crisis events and issues, as this will influence the level of response required.

Integrating these crisis factors in a defined response matrix will help communications professionals—and the entire crisis response team—make informed decisions about resource allocation, messaging and

the overall crisis response strategy.

Creating an actionable crisis plan

With the RACI model in place, as well as a predefined response matrix, one has a solid foundation for creating a well-informed and comprehensive crisis communications plan. At G&S, we deploy these elements as the strategic core of our response protocols. Here's how our seven-step process works.

Identification and risk assessment: Begin by identifying potential crises that the brand may face. Conduct a thorough risk assessment that considers much more than the "most likely" scenarios.

Stakeholder mapping: Determine who the key stakeholders are in various crisis scenarios. This includes internal and external parties such as employees, customers, regulators and the media.

RACI assignment: Assign RACI roles for each aspect of the crisis communications plan based on the identified stakeholders and their respective responsibilities.

Message development: Craft clear, concise and empathetic messages that address the needs and concerns of stakeholders. Messages should be adapted to the specific crisis scenario.

Response matrix creation: Develop a response matrix that factors in probability, immediacy, priority and severity. This matrix will guide decision-making during a crisis.

Testing and training: Regularly test the crisis communications plan through simulations and drills. Ensure that the responsible individuals are well-prepared to execute their roles.

Continuous evaluation and improvement: Crisis communications planning is an ongoing process. Regularly evaluate and update the plan based on changing circumstances, emerging risks and lessons learned from past crises.

In the high-stakes world of crisis communications, success lies in meticulous planning, clear role definition and a systematic approach to managing crises. By applying the RACI model and overlaying crisis factors such as probability, immediacy, priority and severity into the response matrix, communications professionals can navigate even the most challenging situations with confidence.

Steve Halsey is the Chief Growth Officer at G&S Business Communications. ○



Steve Halsey

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE MODERN MARKETPLACE

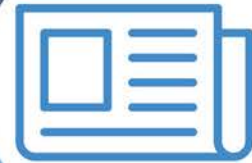
For over 20 years, Stanton has built a distinguished track record of helping clients deal with the unexpected and working to get the right message to the right audience at the right time.



Message Training



Employee Communications



Media Management

- ✓ Utilize deep experience in crisis and reputation management across finance, professional services, technology, healthcare, and other sectors
- ✓ Strive to identify vulnerabilities before their potential effects arise and to develop clear issues management roadmaps.
- ✓ Provide top-level counsel to help protect your reputation before, during, and after a crisis hits and when crucial issues arise.
- ✓ Curate thoughtful plans that help navigate challenges and seize opportunities to secure lasting leadership positions.

Nonprofit boards serve key role in crises: prevention

Nonprofits can quickly fall victim to public scrutiny and criticism in a crisis. What role does communications play when crisis hits a nonprofit board?

By Jill Allread

Serving the underserved, protecting nature and improving children's health and quality of life are a few of the critical contributions made by nonprofit organizations in large and small communities. While enjoying broad public support for their mission-driven work, nonprofits can quickly fall under public scrutiny and criticism in a crisis that can threaten even those with a powerful reputation. A crisis threatens trust.

When embroiled in a crisis, it's not only the organization's executive leadership that's judged. Trustees of nonprofit boards can find themselves feeling threatened or having their performance called into question. Responsible for the governance and fiscal responsibility of the organization, board members rarely expect to have their philanthropic goodwill questioned. But it happens. And more often than expected.

In one situation that threatened the existence of a community nonprofit, board members were unaware that the organization's executive director inappropriately moved federal grant funds earmarked for research into a construction project. He intended to replace the funds when raised; however, the federal agency discovered the misappropriation, and it exercised its authority to sweep all the nonprofit's funds, leaving it on the verge of closure. To help restore public confidence, every board member—except for two who joined after the issue was discovered—resigned. It was traumatic for board members whose emotions ranged from anger to heartbreak, because they all believed in the mission of the nonprofit and weren't aware of the executive director's action. The organization survived and slowly recovered by pledging transparency and demonstrating new processes and safeguards under new leadership.

A responsive and responsible board is critical to an organization's ability to survive a crisis. Boards succeed when they keep the organization's mission and values as a guide to maintain stakeholder confidence. And they have a risk management and crisis plan in place to help navigate serious issues, such as:

- Employee or public safety threats.
- Misuse or mismanagement of the organization's financial resources.
- Conflicts of interest that suggest inappropriate financial gain.
- Personnel issues such as allegations of sexual harassment or discrimination.

- Covering up embarrassing or unethical behaviors that raise questions about the organization's values.

There's no shortage of potential challenges and vulnerabilities when managing a successful nonprofit organization, and board members must know the risks and be proactive.

A board's role

Nonprofit executives are on the front line every day managing challenges and maintaining public and donor support. Lack of financial resources is the top reason nonprofits fail, making it vital to maintain trust and protect the organization's reputation. Organizations that strategically mitigate and pre-empt threats are ones that proactively communicate, set clear expectations and standards and uphold the values and mission of the organization.

A passive board or one that is detached from the organization's leadership and operations is vulnerable. That doesn't mean board members can get entangled in daily operations or assume they can speak on behalf of the organization from their own point of view. The board is responsible for governance and the financial stability of a nonprofit and its reputation. Understanding potential risks and having a plan that helps guide the organization during a crisis is an important pillar for good board governance.

Probing and asking tough questions is a crucial role for the board that holds leadership accountable; reviews proposed plans of action, offers expertise, such as legal or public relations or accounting talent; and uses consistent, agreed-upon messaging to help ensure the organization has a unified voice.

A nonprofit organization's reputation is anchored in its responsiveness to its publics and in prioritizing the well-being of people and responsibility to those it serves. It's the executive director's responsibility to keep board members informed. If board members are kept out of the information loop, they are vulnerable to public questioning and can't fulfill their responsibility to protect the organization.

Public interest in—and expectations on—nonprofit organizations is high because they often receive support from public entities, grants and private donations. Board members must maintain public trust. When a crisis results from an executive director being removed, it's the board that must step in to ensure ongoing management and leadership during the crisis.

Preparedness check list

When a crisis threatens a nonprofit, leadership can take steps to help alleviate or mitigate the negative impact:

- Inform the board of the issues and facts. Provide continual updates to board leadership.

- Respond quickly when the potential of an issue arises. Hoping it will resolve itself wastes valuable time and only leaves the organization more vulnerable.

- Avoid being caught up in minute-to-minute concerns at the cost of guiding the overarching strategies that are approved by board members.



Jill Allread

Here are tips for board members when a crisis occurs:

- Do be familiar with the organization's crisis plan before an issue occurs. It can provide a checklist and order of actions to follow as you navigate a situation.

- Do gather the facts surrounding the situation. The board is responsible for collaborating with staff leadership and proactively addressing emerging issues.

- Do maintain confidentiality in every circumstance.

- Do ensure there is a priority on human and community safety.

- Do take corrective action as soon as possible. This might mean suspending an executive leader during an investigation or removing an executive found to have violated the organization's code of ethics and values.

- Do communicate as appropriate with consistent messages created and approved through the crisis plan.

- Do recognize that the success and failure of an organization is tied to the work and expertise of its board of directors. Never assume all the information needed is available. Take a hard look at the situation, including causes and solutions. Stay involved and informed, and continually ask questions.

Nonprofit organizations are susceptible to many issues that can threaten their reputation and, in turn, their relationships with staff, donors and community. Preparedness by the executive leadership and board can make navigating a crisis more successful and help in the post-crisis recovery. Defining roles, communicating consistently, following a crisis plan and having a risk management process in place will help a nonprofit board be a vital asset to the health of a nonprofit.

Jill Allread, APR, is CEO of Public Communications Inc. ●

COMPLEXITY IS OUR SPECIALTY

Businesses are operating in an increasingly dynamic, complex and regulated environment where the boundaries are blurred, the stakes are raised and volatility is a constant.

That's where Dentons Global Advisors comes in.

We help protect our clients' brand, valuation, reputation and permission to operate so they can weather whatever storm comes their way and ultimately emerge even stronger.

dentonsglobaladvisors.com

Reputation management and the crisis continuum

The best companies anticipate reputation crises and are always on alert.

By Thomas Graham

On any given day, the odds of an attack on your organization's reputation are low, but never zero. In a world where "A lie can travel around the world and back again while the truth is lacing up its boots," what's the right approach to this challenge?

In 2024, reputation management is best understood as an integral part of your communication operation, heavily informed by your crisis communication plan. And this requires thinking of crisis communication as an ongoing activity—not a temporary state invoked during an emergency, but a continuum.

While this approach makes sense logically, it can be hard for many organizations to adopt. You're good people doing good things in an ethical manner. You don't see yourself as controversial or political. Why would anyone attack you? And wouldn't such attacks be easily defeated with the truth?

Organizational goodness can be a blind spot, so it may help to think of it as prudent, not paranoid. Crisis prevention is preferable to crisis response.

Operating on a continuum

Perhaps the biggest change to incorporating ongoing reputation management is the notion of a continuum of communication preparedness. In the United States, the military prescribes five graduated levels of readiness concerning global events, known as defense readiness conditions (DEFCONs). DEFCON 5 is the lowest threat level, DEFCON 1 signals the impending outbreak of a nuclear war. The important point is that even at DEFCON 1, threats are monitored, evaluated, reported and, if necessary, acted on. The threat level is never zero.

Your communication team should be continually scanning for reputational threats and processing them via your crisis communication chain as a matter of routine. Yes, ongoing threat detection enables an earlier response, but it does more than that: operating it familiarizes your core team with the communication environment so you can make informed decisions rather than emotional responses.

This second benefit can't be stressed enough. Football coach Vince Lombardi famously said, "Football is two things. It's blocking and tackling. I don't care about formations or new offenses or tricks on defense. You block and tackle better than the team you're playing, you win."

Lombardi's words are more than a call to

focus on the fundamentals. Blocking and tackling drills teach not only technique—they also build confidence. You learn that you can take a hit and keep playing.

It's the same with reputation management. On any given day, your critics will be out there. Hits are to be expected. When you monitor the media landscape, you'll learn the level of background noise, who's talking, who's listening and who's amplifying. You'll see that the threat level is never zero.

Practice telling the truth

Crisis response planning begins with an assessment of likely threats and the severity of each threat; extending the idea of crisis to include reputational attacks is a logical extension of the plan. And because minor hits come daily, reputation management allows you to exercise your reporting, decision and response channels daily.

Transitioning to the idea of operating on a continuum is best done in phases. Begin with monitoring, develop reporting and recommendation processes and engage deliberately.

Your team is as important as the plan. Moving from an "all hands on deck" model of crisis response—necessary in the case of an emergency-driven crisis such as a fire, crash or product recall—your team will need to be trained and organized so that routine monitoring, reporting and response are built into your daily routine.

When the team is ready to respond confidently and quickly with the truth, this can stop the momentum of a negative story or change the dynamic. For situations posing a threat where you don't have a complete response ready, engage swiftly, even if it's a bridge. The first hours are critical. The first 30 minutes can define your organization's reputation.

Practice is as important as the plan

If you think you're already doing this, chances are you're not. Without a dedicated monitoring and reporting system in place and operating, you're likely to miss early warning signs and pay undue attention to mere noise. 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, a 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. Making reputation management an ongoing function is a deliberate action that both reduces the possibility of allowing an assault on your reputation to gain momentum and avoids *ad hoc*, emotional responses that can make a situation worse.

Your response—or lack thereof—will be judged

True 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 articulate messaging, a plan and practice.

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. And proper handling starts with early detection and reporting.

Knowing the communication landscape and engaging strategically helps lower your threat profile. When nimble organizations take active charge of their reputations, the price of misinformation goes up. And lies can't get very far when you're ready to answer with authority and truth.

"Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the mouth," is a famous axiom by champion boxer Mike Tyson. But the second part of his quote is also important. "Then, like a rat, they stop in fear and freeze." Like Lombardi's teams, boxers practice to learn how to avoid, take and deliver hits. It's built into their daily routine.

We call our approach Crosswind CPR+. It's crisis communication focused on an active, pre-crisis engagement that paves the way for a rapid, organized and smooth crisis response and reputation enhancement. Because, on any given day, the chances are never zero.

Thomas Graham is President, CEO and founder of Crosswind Media & Public Relations in Austin, Texas. ○



Thomas Graham

Public Policy in 2024: Risk or Opportunity?

8

dynamic firms

350+

policy and communications experts

1200+

client organizations and brands served

PPHC  Public Policy
Holding Company



Navigating a volatile future

Why anticipating and planning for a crisis is non-negotiable in 2024.

By Jimmy Centers and Marc Goldberg

We're living in what promises to be the most volatile political year of our lifetime, a year that will have rolling and deep repercussions—from our kitchen tables to the bench of the U.S. Supreme Court and beyond.

For companies that are in this tumultuous terrain, we have a simple message: Failure to anticipate and plan for challenges adjacent to societal divisions already roiling our nation is tantamount to business malpractice.

To put a finer point on it: Engaging with seasoned, bipartisan communications experts to establish consistent, sensible internal and external crisis communications strategies is non-negotiable in 2024. Recent experience tells us that, in this climate, it's not a question of if business leaders will grapple with a public-facing crisis that threatens their company, but when.

The political and social turmoil that we've witnessed and what likely lies ahead demands that companies large and small prioritize strategic planning. Smart planning should include actively engaging with policymakers and anticipating and assessing in real-time our evolving social and political landscape. This is imperative to effectively navigate the uncertainties ahead while staying true to core missions.

That's where Cornerstone comes in. Our bipartisan team's deep experience and unmatched insights in early voting states—notably via our offices and professional teams in Iowa and New Hampshire—give us a unique ability to keep our fingers on the political and social pulse of the nation. Our established presence in Washington, D.C., along with 10 other states, gives us the reach to take your message to Capitol Hill, the State House or City Hall.

We serve as strategists and sounding boards for clients ranging from Fortune 500 companies to small non-profits and work in close collaboration with our government affairs team. This close working relationship with a bipartisan government relations practice within our firm is essential to many clients' success, serving as a connective tissue between clients, policymakers and the communities in which they're doing business or otherwise serving the public.

Cornerstone's fully integrated team of strategic communicators and government relations professionals offer a dual threat: A cavalry in the halls of Congress or the state capitol and a messaging brigade providing

air cover in the media, across stakeholder groups and on digital platforms.

And we know all too well that in this era of relentless change and increasingly complicated social and political engagement on both the domestic and international fronts, failure to establish and adhere to a sound, strategic crisis communications plan can lead to sometimes shocking, unintended consequences.

We've seen first-hand in recent years the vulnerability of businesses to unforeseen challenges, from the global pandemic and political unrest to technological disruption and emerging and complicated social and cultural issues. Our job is to help our clients build and protect their reputations and their abilities to operate resiliently through foresight, insight, planning and relationships.

Charting that resilient, consistent course can take many forms.

- A client grappling with an uptick in crime at several of its national outlets is working with us to navigate the important social conversation around deterrence and engage in community building through its charitable foundation to address the issue creatively and authentically.

- We're working closely with companies and organizations seeking to improve their responsiveness to the needs of their employees while navigating outside pressures.

- Our team is leveraging the national footprint of *Fortune* 500 companies, creating dynamic, effective national, state and local campaigns designed to speak directly to elected officials and policy leaders on their home turf while creating broader awareness and driving desired change.

- We're helping companies and organizations stay true to their internal and external missions and principles—especially on diversity and equity issues—while anticipating and planning for potential customer or consumer reactions in an environment that increasingly demands transparency and places pressure on companies to engage on social issues.

- Across our physical footprint in D.C. and 12 states, we're consistently providing opportunities for our clients to engage directly with policymakers, community leaders, advocates and members of the media to pressure test ideas, gain insight and develop valuable relationships.

- We're delivering consistent, real-time insight to clients seeking to understand

the political and social realities of issues affecting how they do business, and deeply informed lookaheads as they plan for the future of their operations.

- Our work for clients is regularly rooted in quantitative and qualitative research, where we measure sentiment across a variety of audiences and stakeholders, creating a strategic communications plan to address the challenges identified.

As we tell our clients, it's not just about weathering the storm. It's about how you navigate through it, internally and externally and, as importantly, how you communicate your actions and decisions to the world.

Social media has been both the boon and bane of many companies. What once served as an efficient advertising and consumer engagement platform has become a platform on which reputations can be won or lost—mostly lost—in a hot minute. That's why we work with clients to monitor and assess risks and responses to social media communications, including when and why to engage—an essential element of a crisis communications plan.

As we approach 2024, and all fervently hope for a cooling of the national discourse and a more respectful, thoughtful ethic to take hold, we know all too well the harshness that has become familiar during general election years.

Benjamin Franklin's old saying rings true as you prepare to navigate the choppy waters ahead. "By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail."

Jimmy Centers is Principal at Cornerstone Public Affairs and co-founded the firm's Public Affairs practice out of its Des Moines, Iowa office. He previously served as Communications Director former U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of China Terry Branstad and current Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds when they served as Governor and Lieutenant Governor, respectively. Marc Goldberg is Principal at Cornerstone Public Affairs in the firm's New Hampshire office. Previously, he served as Chief of Staff for the office of Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH), was press secretary for former Maryland Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown and Communications Director for former Rep. Suzanne Kosmas (D-FL) ○



Jimmy Centers



Marc Goldberg



Strategy | Communications | Advertising

Impactful Work That Matters.

There is no company that better understands the intersection of media, politics, and policy. We help you communicate meaningfully to motivate your audiences.

We bring a campaign mindset to everything we do for causes, candidates, and companies.

Causes: We fight alongside advocates on the most important causes. Protecting a woman's right to choose, ensuring everyone's right to marry who they love, combating climate change, and tackling the scourge of gun violence.

Campaigns: We develop winning campaign strategies, effective messages, and deliver memorable creative for candidates, committees, and ballot measures across the country.

Corporate: We help some of the world's biggest, best-known brands communicate strategically, build reputations and relationships, and weather crises.

New York, Albany, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, New England

www.SKDKnick.com | info@skdknick.com

[X@skdk](#) [in@skdknick](#)

In crisis, there's no substitute for preparedness

Why the best time for an organization to plan for a crisis is before the storm hits.

By Jeff Grappone

When bad news happens—from litigation to worker injuries to cultural missteps—organizations too often struggle to keep the situation from spinning out of control. They lose valuable time deciding how to react before the wet cement of public opinion hardens. When they're finally ready to respond, the damage is already done—in some instances costing billions.

In crisis mitigation and management, there's no substitute for preparedness. The best time to plan for a crisis is before your organization is in the eye of the storm. Companies can often forecast the various crises that could befall them, sometimes even with great specificity. While crisis situations require a reactive response, there's an opportunity to craft a robust proactive strategy to preserve a company's reputation.

That's especially important because of how rapidly bad news can travel online. And social media networks don't just provide a way for people to see the news—they also provide a channel to interact with the news. In today's increasingly polarized and hyper-political world, that provides an opportunity for news consumers to pour gasoline on the fire—raising the stakes for companies to quickly contain crises and pivot to proactive storytelling.

To get ahead of future challenges, it is essential to craft a strategy with guidelines to counter attacks and address any potential crises. Here are the key areas where thoughtful planning can go a long way to protect and preserve an organization's hard-earned reputation.

Vulnerability audit: The first step in crisis planning is for an organization to engage in an objective self-examination to identify its vulnerabilities, essentially looking around corners to see worst-case scenarios. This approach requires taking off rose-colored glasses to see the company through the eyes of opponents and critics. With a comprehensive audit of pressure points, it's possible to establish the universe of areas that will require careful consideration and planning.

Align internal stakeholders: It's critical to identify key decision makers before a crisis hits, with an eye toward avoiding silos. Bringing together external and internal communicators is just the first step. There's also a need to ensure that there's visibility across the enterprise, identifying key indi-

viduals within the organization who contribute to the organization's reputation. For example, bringing government affairs professionals into the tent is important to prevent a reputation problem from becoming a regulatory crisis. Executives who are responsible for human resources, sales and vendor relationships should also be engaged, working to create a 360-degree team for crisis response.

Develop key messages: Crisis preparedness necessitates the development of topline messages to push back on attacks and reframe the narrative. Guided by an overarching message framework that encapsulates the organization's core values, there's an opportunity to build out bespoke messaging for various vulnerabilities. This activity should include drafting holding statements and Q&A documents that enable an organization to address issues publicly and proactively.

Internal communications: While crises are frequently considered external problems, an organization's employees are key stakeholders who need direct outreach. Communicating with employees authentically and transparently is critical to maintaining their confidence. With internal communications, timing is critical. Whenever possible, no employee should first learn about their organization's crisis by reading the news. Senior leaders need to communicate broadly with their teams as early as possible, whether that's through written communications or in a town hall-style setting.

Real-time rapid response: There's not a moment to lose when responding to a crisis. Communicators must quickly assess the damage of public attacks and execute appropriate responses through counter-messaging materials and media education. Robust media monitoring and social listening must be initiated to help decision-makers see what is being said about the organization and help them adjust the forward strategy if needed. When reporting is inaccurate or misleading, assertive media relations efforts are needed to correct the record immediately—lest flawed reporting get picked up by other news outlets or communications platforms.

Social risk framework: Controlling the online environment is critical to protecting an organization's reputation and stopping brush fires from becoming infernos. It's

essential for an organization's crisis guidelines to include a framework for engaging on hot-button issues that matter to stakeholders and could create enterprise risk. This framework should include an assessment process as well as best practices for diffusing potential crises online before they begin.

Thought leadership: As part of efforts to reframe the narrative, it may be advantageous for the organization's top leader, such as the CEO, to push messaging through opinion pieces in local or national media. This controlled environment allows her or him an opportunity to lay out the organization's views in a fulsome way, without a media filter. Moreover, it can help put the crisis in a broader context, highlighting the organization's core values and laying out a vision for the future.

Third-party validation: The best time to make a friend is when you don't need one. Before the storm hits, communicators should identify external individuals who can speak favorably about the organization should the need arise. This could include academics, industry groups or sympathetic commentators. If the road gets especially rough, calling in third-party voices can help redirect the narrative to more favorable terrain.

Tabletop exercises: Once crisis plans are in place and messages are set, it's critical for an organization to pressure test its crisis strategy. Mindful that practice makes perfect, these tabletop exercises help communicators see where their strategy and crisis guidelines can be strengthened or adjusted. Tabletop simulation exercises stress test the critical response process, identify what's working, improve what isn't working and define next steps.

In today's red-hot news cycle, a crisis can break out at any moment. Although no two crises are exactly the same, having a standardized approach for responding to bad news can make the difference between saving an organization's reputation and lasting damage that decimates the bottom line. With organizations of all kinds coming under increasing scrutiny, there's no better time than the present to make a crisis communications plan.

Jeff Grappone is an Executive Vice President and Chair of the Public Affairs Practice at ROKK Solutions in Washington. ○



Jeff Grappone



Protecting your most valuable asset —
your brand.

From crisis readiness assessment, crisis planning and preparation, training and simulation to rapid response and 24/7 support, FINN Partners helps your company deal with difficult issues at every turn.

Trusted partners in an ever-changing world.
Learn more at finnpartners.com

FINN
PARTNERS

Crisis communications resolutions

Why an evaluation of your organization's crisis preparedness is one of the best head starts you can give yourself for 2024.

By Mike Goodwin

New Year's resolutions are all about taking control and preparing for a better future. For communications professionals, resolutions that address crisis preparedness should be given top priority. January is an ideal time to take stock in your capabilities and make an honest evaluation of your organization's crisis preparations.

Even if existing plans are in place, it's important to acknowledge that issues and players are constantly in motion and that plan components have a limited shelf life. Every organization is unique, but here's a list of crisis resolutions that will give you a head start in 2024.

Form a crisis team

When managing a crisis, it never makes sense to go it alone. Forming a dedicated crisis team ensures that you have the expertise, institutional knowledge and authority to address critical issues, gain alignment on messaging and react in real-time to changing events.

In addition to corporate communications staff, effective crisis teams should include executive leadership and representatives from key business units, human resources, legal, operations and others who can meaningfully contribute to active problem-solving. Taking the time now to identify potential team members and establish protocols to follow in the event of a crisis will shorten future response times and ensure you have the right people on board when necessary.

Conduct a reputational audit

January is also an ideal time for organizations to take a close look at what issues can potentially pose a threat to reputational equity for the coming year. All too often, organizations minimize the possibility and impact of potential crisis events, planning responses only for obvious vulnerabilities or for repetition of past events.

Led by corporate communications, reputational audits engage subject matter experts across the organization seeking to identify issues that could lead to unwanted headlines, customer dissatisfaction or negative social media activity. Issues vary by organization but may include lawsuits, regulatory changes, product safety, leadership succession, labor relations, employee behavior and other topics that, if left unmanaged, can pose a significant threat to reputation and brand value.

Develop key messages

Once you have a better understanding of the issues that may present challenges in 2024, take the time to develop messaging that will give you a head start on managing an actual crisis. The most common mistake organizations make is assuming their experience and deep subject-matter knowledge are enough preparation for a crisis and that they'll be able to respond immediately. The reality of today's news cycle is that public opinion fueled by social media evolves more rapidly than ever before, often creating polarizing viewpoints with little notice.

Even if you have examples from prior events or draft messaging in place, it makes sense to invest time now in refreshing holding statements, talking points, Q&A and other documents and circulating them to internal stakeholders to gain alignment and approval. If a crisis breaks and reporters issue short deadlines, it would be measurably more difficult to develop responses that reflect the full experience and intentions of leadership and key stakeholders.

Conduct a live drill

No matter how much time and effort is placed on message development and planning, success in any crisis depends on execution. That's why it's essential for crisis teams to conduct live rehearsals of potential crisis events to check response time, staff availability, coordination and the ability to adapt to fast-evolving issues. An effective drill can not only minimize disruption to the organization but will also include several random elements that test a team's ability to employ best practices as well as improvise to address unexpected challenges.

It's also effective to engage a wide range of team members to roleplay as journalists, emergency personnel or local government. This practice raises awareness for the organization's preparedness and improves overall communication with crisis team members in the event of a future crisis event.

Debrief on 2023

This is a great time to gather your crisis team and conduct a full debriefing on the past year from a strategic communications perspective. This exercise should include a review of previous goals, an examination of media coverage from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective and feedback from employees, customers, reporters and others who play a role in defining an or-

ganization's reputation. To advance your preparedness, direct questions need to be addressed that expose vulnerabilities and identify which capabilities need to be improved in the coming year.

Maintain media relationships

It's no secret that good working relationships with reporters are essential to any successful crisis plan. What many have lost sight of since the advent of COVID-19 lockdowns is the value of in-person meetings to further these relationships. Hybrid work environments have made face-to-face meetings rare, which means that brief, in-person meetings to discuss editorial needs will automatically make your team stand apart from the crowd. January is a good time to schedule these meetings as reporters regroup from the holidays and are actively seeking content for the next quarter.

No time to prepare?

January is a particularly busy time for communications professionals, so why take the time to take these steps if you're not currently facing a crisis situation? The reality is that, of all the deliverables managed by communicators, crisis events have the highest potential for reputational fallout.

Outcomes are often driven by outside opinions or random elements, which makes preparation even more critical. Investing time now allows communicators to reduce at least some of the random nature of a crisis, providing you with the ability to respond in a more proactive, strategic manner.

Mike Goodwin is Senior Vice President at Stanton Public Relations and Marketing. ●



Mike Goodwin

PR brief

Reevemark reps Peltz's Disney run

Reevemark is representing Nelson Peltz's Trian Fund Management as it promises to take its case directly to Walt Disney shareholders that it needs to shake up its board.

Disney CEO Bob Iger in December extended an offer to Trian to meet with his company's board, but rejected its request that Peltz become a Director.

Trian, which used Reevemark in last year's bid to get Peltz a board seat, says it gave Disney an opportunity to "right the ship" but the company's shares have tumbled \$70 billion in value.

"Investor confidence is low, key strategic questions loom, and even Disney's CEO is acknowledging that the Company's challenges are greater than previously believed," said Trian in a statement.

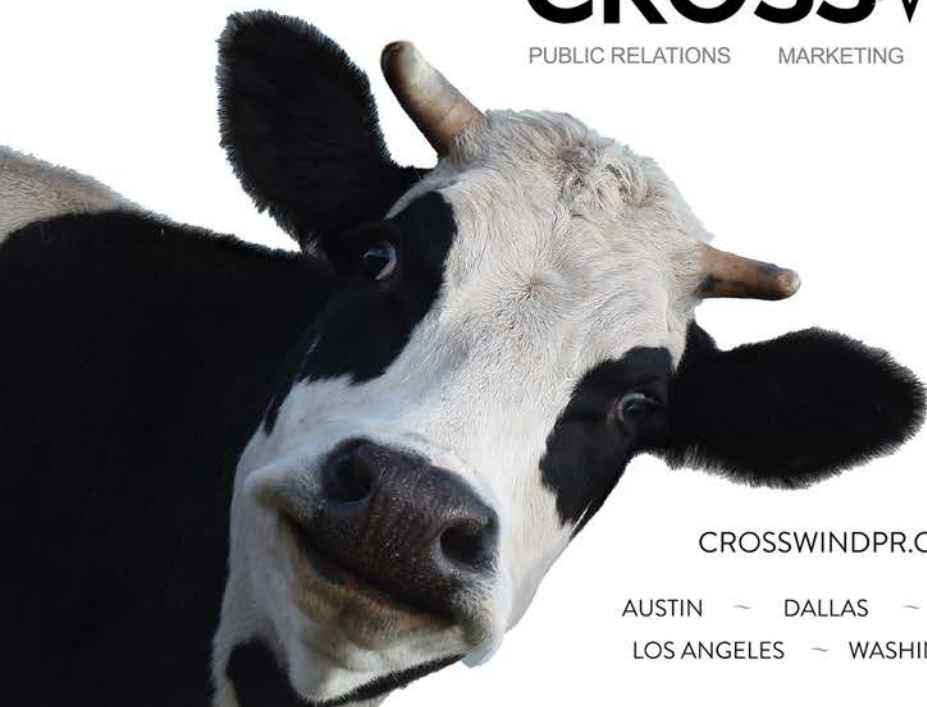


ON ANY GIVEN DAY, YOUR CHANCES OF BEING KILLED BY A COW ARE LOW. BUT NEVER ZERO.

The same is true for encountering a reputation crisis.
So, beef up your crisis communications planning today with the
experienced reputation wranglers from Texas at Crosswind.

CROSSWIND

PUBLIC RELATIONS MARKETING MEDIA CREATIVE



CROSSWINDPR.COM

AUSTIN ~ DALLAS ~ HOUSTON
LOS ANGELES ~ WASHINGTON, DC

Convergence, complexity and crisis at the crossroads

How organizations can anticipate, prepare and respond to crises in an increasingly complex world where a convergent landscape of global challenges, threats and risks seem to arrive at an unrelenting pace.

By Jessica Berk Ross

I was at a holiday lunch with several clients in December, and we were recounting where we were during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike other major historical events, the pandemic can't be pinpointed to a single moment in time, like the Kennedy assassination, Reagan being shot or the morning of 9/11, but rather, a painfully slow drip, drip understanding that our lives were now forever altered. The frog in the boiling pot. A gradual realization for some, the rush of panic for others.

We talked about how our uncertainty and confusion soon turned to fear and loss. That ten of us could be sharing these stories unmasked, at a round table with shared food was evidence that the post-pandemic epoch has been ushered in. It's clear that the pandemic era has already become something of a generational inflection point that we're beginning to mythologize.

This new era has been shaped and defined by those years of disruption, a cataclysm of economic, social, technological and health impacts. A period when the fault lines of inequality, access and scarce resources were further exposed.

In a perfect world, suffering would make us stronger, and it would be an impetus to catalyze positive change. With our interconnectedness, shared humanity and vulnerability revealed, solutions should be proffered. Research and science supercharged. And indeed, the progress we've witnessed has been extraordinary. In our business of strategic communications, we're blessed to have an excellent vantage point from which to see how nations, organizations, institutions and companies meet the moment, drive solutions and strive forward. But threats and risks remain extant and looming.

Notably, but not surprisingly, the past year has seen an enormous number of self-inflicted crises. The "own goal" of communications. And, it seems, the bigger and more global the stage, the larger the blunders. Some are communications gaffes, some are existential organizational failures and some are just plain greed and corruption. From the World Cup alcohol change-up to the backchannel communications reveal at the COP, to Crypto fraud, to Congressional dysfunction. And let's not even get started on X. It's hard to believe that so

much of our global chaos isn't intentional.

So yes, a complex world demands even more clever solutions. Individual, corporate, national and global challenges all grow more complicated. Threats seem—and are—closer. The pace is unrelenting, and this urgency requires more from all of us. No longer can solutions be reduced to services and sectors or offered up in silos. Lagging is losing.

How does an organization navigate those growing and urgent complexities? Here are some thoughts going into 2024 to help avoid—or at least whether—the coming crises.

Roadmap of the five Bs

Build convergent teams. This moment demands multi-disciplinary expertise. Schisms are wider. Pitfalls and land mines abound. Crises cross the boundaries of DEI, sustainability, global public health, Education, public policy and public affairs, technology ... the list goes on. Success will require convergent expertise. Tiger Teams of specialized experts working together to anticipate and solve critical issues is table stakes. Category expertise is critical, but single-swim lane approaches will be sure to flounder. Arming yourself with insights from across the communications landscape will be the key to staying afloat. We must have all the tools in the toolbox at hand, but please, no more hammer/nail solutions.

Broaden the aperture. An art-and-science approach to planning is essential. Bring real-time analysis and data to the equation. Don't guess. Really seek to understand your internal and external ecosystems. Employ social listening, competitive and comparative assessments and go to school on others in your environment. Use that aperture to let in more light to reach your sensors. The illumination will be rewarding.

Banish complacency. Rethink your established beliefs. That crisis planning exercise that was so helpful a few years ago, guess what? It's a Hummer, and your competitors are rolling out in a new Cybertruck. Be sure to bring your stakeholders together for a regular strategic workshop exercise. Scenario planning must include what's waking you up at night but also think beyond known risks and see

around the corners. What's lurking? What can be planned against? How can you build in even more resiliency?

Be in a ready stance. Now that you have the pieces in place to both anticipate and respond to what may come, how do you avoid the paralysis of shock when something bad does happen? Give yourself a guide to make it easier to deploy the needed resources with the right level of firepower.

A carefully thought-out flagging and response flow can help to simplify and clarify the level of response required. Too often, I've seen panic drive the desire for urgent action that could too easily lead to regret, and yes, the dreaded "unintended consequences."

Be measured. Meet a crisis where it is. Do not self-escalate.

Boost ideation. And as you're planning for the worst, lay the groundwork for growth. A crisis planning Theory of Change model is a useful framework. Outline where you would like to see yourself one, three and five years into the future. Now, work backward. What would you need to get there? Build it in. Crisis planning isn't just a prophylactic, it can be a catalyst. Envisioning the aspirational future and helping to build from a steady state to an ideal. Visioning is critical. Find a good facilitator to help get you there.

And so, as we close in on the end of 2023, imagine that you're sitting around the table at that holiday lunch two years ahead in time to 2025. Even the greatest of optimists must know that these will be challenging years, with much to solve for. What inflection points will we be reflecting upon? What crises will we have collectively survived? What will we have learned that will help us to better navigate the seemingly unforgiving communications landscape?

In this increasingly convergent landscape of global challenges, a little focus on the principles of the roadmap can help us on that journey toward a future destination that we can just now begin to imagine.

Jessica Berk Ross is Managing Partner of Public Affairs at Finn Partners. ○



Jessica Berk Ross

PUBLIC AFFAIRS & STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

- 
- Corporate Communications
 - Crisis Communications
 - Event Planning & Execution
 - Message Development
 - Media Training
 - Media Analysis
 - Website & Social Media Builds
 - Reputation Management
 - Social Listening
 - Strategic Counsel
 - Public Opinion Research

We help our clients anticipate and navigate the opportunities, complexities and challenges that occur at the intersection of business, policy, politics, and public perception to achieve their desired objectives.

In addition to Washington DC, Cornerstone has offices in 12 states, giving our firm a unique ability to bring a true local understanding alongside our national reach and expertise.

National suicide crisis demands strategic communication

How the skills of crisis communicators can play a key role in suicide prevention.

By Michelle Ubben

While the word crisis may bring to mind a single, triggering incident, a crisis can also take the form of a disturbing trend, whether an uptick in drunk driving, a failure to recycle properly or an increase in suicide among a specific population.

As professional communicators, we understand and respect the tremendous power of insightful messaging and communications strategies to affect weighty societal problems, including suicide, which claimed 50,000 lives last year. That tragic figure is the highest number ever recorded, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

And while months of awareness can prompt a temporary spike in focus, combating a societal crisis requires effective and sustained messaging that's part of an ongoing, year-round effort. Americans agree: According to a recent Harris poll, 81 percent of Americans say that in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's more important than ever to make suicide a national priority.

So, how can communications help? First, by creating awareness.

Let's look at Florida, which often serves as a bellwether for the nation. A recent Sachs Media Breakthrough Research survey found that, when given a list of options, only 27 percent of Floridians could accurately identify 988 as the correct number to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Since its July 2022 launch, 988 has served as a powerful new national tool, aimed at reducing reliance on law enforcement or emergency departments to respond to mental health crises by connecting callers with local crisis counselors.

The deficit of 988 awareness to date may have been intentional to make sure the new system wasn't overwhelmed with calls. In fact, none of the nearly \$1 billion in federal funding for the Lifeline was earmarked for the kind of public relations campaign that could effectively drive public awareness. But with more than a year of experience under its belt, it's time to get the word out.

Second, an insightful communications strategy can also support suicide prevention through messaging that's informed by research and tailored for target audiences.

The National Alliance for Suicide Pre-

vention offers a 988-messaging framework that emphasizes strategic, safe and positive messages. These evidence-based guidelines can help overcome messaging challenges like how to highlight the prevalence of the problem without normalizing suicide as a response.

Consider that our Sachs Media Breakthrough Research survey found that almost one in three Floridians (31 percent) acknowledge having contemplated suicide at some point in their lives.

While that statistic is alarming and demonstrates that the problem is widespread, it's important to include the context that only six percent of those who contemplated suicide had considered it. Only three percent had actually attempted suicide, another two percent had seriously considered it without attempting and one percent considered it, but not seriously.

In other words, if you experience suicidal thoughts, you're not alone—many others have had those urges without acting on them. This can be paired with a hopeful message that help is available as well as specific guidance about where to get it.

According to our survey, 46 percent of Floridians lacked the confidence that they know where to turn or reach out for help if they or someone they know felt suicidal. This finding points to a critical gap in knowledge about support systems and resources, especially among older individuals and men.

Nuanced messaging can also help reduce the stigma that so often inhibits people who are having suicidal thoughts from reaching out for help. Identifying someone as "living with a mental illness" or "experiencing a mental health crisis" is better than "suffering from a mental illness" or, worse, "the mentally ill," a term that establishes mental illness as a person's entire identity.

As communicators, we know that effective communication campaigns tailor messaging, outreach strategies, channels and messengers for different audiences.

Young people have been one demographic focus in recent years, as federal data documented growing suicide rates among those 35 and younger. Our survey found almost two-thirds (64 percent) of Floridians under the age of 35 report having contemplated suicide—more than twice

the rate of all Floridians. A critical message for this audience may be that 988 allows callers to connect with a mental health counselor in a variety of ways, including text or chat, which may be preferred by younger callers.

The most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control document a new trend: A growing number of suicides among older adults, which pushed the nation's overall suicide rate to a historic high last year. The risk was particularly high among elderly men 75 and over, whose rate of suicide was double that of young males, ages 15 to 24.

This is where specific research can provide a deep dive into this demographic that may identify risk factors and help unlock strategies and messages to counteract the rise in suicide among older males, even as we tailor messages and outreach strategies for other demographics.

As a firm with a long history of building successful behavioral and mental health campaigns for clients like the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the Florida Association for Behavior Analysis, we know the power of communication to raise awareness, reduce stigma and deliver motivating, life-saving messages.

Suicide is a national crisis, but it's a crisis that can be mitigated by smart, sustained and strategic communications efforts. Beginning with research to understand drivers of behavior, to segmenting target audiences and tailoring messages and outreach strategies to move them, communications is a crisis prevention strategy with great potential to save lives.

Suicide prevention can't be limited to a single month or week; it demands our constant attention and commitment. And it's not only within the purview of behavioral health providers, government agencies or non-profit organizations—communications professionals can play a big role in addressing and correcting this crisis as well.

Michelle Ubben is President and CEO of Sachs Media. ○



Michelle Ubben



THE STRATEGY AND COMMUNICATIONS FIRM FOR THE MOST COMPLEX SITUATIONS

RESTRUCTURING

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

LIABILITY MANAGEMENT

CRISIS
COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA RELATIONS

INVESTOR RELATIONS

EXTERNAL & INTERNAL
COMMUNICATIONS

CEO POSITIONING

TRANSACTIONAL
COMMUNICATIONS

So, you're testifying on Capitol Hill

The importance of aligning your legal counsel and crisis communications consultant when you're called to testify at a Capitol Hill hearing.

By TJ White

Something bad has happened: The organization you're tasked with leading and defending has found itself in the crosshairs of Capitol Hill. Removing, for a moment, what's occurred that has brought you to this crossroads, it's important to look at the facts:

- You have very little time to prepare.
- What little time you do have to prepare will be spent with your lawyers, going over the myriad ways you could inadvertently set yourself—and your organization—up for a liability nightmare. And, as a result,
- You may lose sight of the significant communications opportunity your upcoming testimony will provide you to set the record straight to stakeholder groups that matter.

Taking a step back, very few people want to be called to testify in front of the Senate or Congress. It's okay to be less than excited. More often than not, you, as the conduit of your organization's message, are rarely in control. You get a handful of minutes to provide your written testimony, after which you prepare for the hours-long onslaught of friendly and unfriendly questions from various members of the committee or subcommittee.

Those questions may include:

"Why have you made it more difficult for the average American to live their life?"

"Why the blatant disregard for America's national security?"

"Why have you paid only \$12,000 in taxes over the past five years?"

The list of difficult and uncomfortable questions is endless. Who's your most important consigliere at this moment? Your lawyers help ensure that anything you say will not result in opening yourself or your organization up to legal liability. So, who's your second-most important consigliere? Your crisis communications consultant.

In lockstep, your respective legal and crisis communications counsel can help you see around the corner on two fronts: that of upcoming litigation risk and that of imminent public relations risk. Ideally, the two are aligned. It's the five percent of the time when they aren't that are most critical, and the onus is on the entire working group to find creative ways to satisfy those conflicting issues.

The issue with total and unequivocal alignment to legal strategy is simple: it will

only make sense to your most "sophisticated" stakeholders, typically a relatively small percentage for most organizations, as it requires them to understand the rationale for certain messaging decisions you have to make. In times of crisis, it's imperative that your stakeholders, regardless of "sophistication," adequately understand what has happened, why it happened and what your organization is doing about it—and you can't expect the majority of your constituents to have a cursory understanding of legal liability. This is exactly where your crisis communications counsel can make the difference. Crisis communications professionals are experts at understanding specific pain points for various stakeholder groups, testing messaging in a controlled environment and anticipating reactions.

Just recently we saw, in many ways, a masterclass on how not to marry the legal risks with the PR risks thanks to testimony from the presidents—some now former—of the University of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. If their respective testimony in December taught us anything it's this: Failure to speak clearly to all of your stakeholders can—and often does—result in immeasurable damage to brand equity and reputation.

Instead:

1. Bring your crisis communications counsel into the mix early—we play well in the sandbox with your legal counsel, we promise—and make mock Q&A as much a part of your preparation as the crafting of your prepared remarks.

2. Take the time to study the officials on the committee and anticipate lines of questioning so you can proactively address them in your prepared remarks. It's a lot easier to make a point on your terms than on someone else's in Q&A.

3. Above all else, if you've been backed against a wall by a line of questioning, take the time you need to formulate a thoughtful response. Don't regurgitate what others on the panel have said; there's no strength in numbers when there's no strength in the character of your collective words.

Does anyone realistically believe that these presidents are themselves anti-Semitic? Probably not, but they over-indexed on the impact their legalized language could have on liability—both for their in-

stitutions and their students—and ended up in an inadvisable position where they couldn't provide anywhere close to an adequate answer to the question "Does calling for the genocide of Jews constitute a breach of your school's code of conduct," which should be a very easy answer to get right, and yet ...

While we can't rewrite what's happened, it's important for people who find themselves thrust into the limelight of a Capitol Hill hearing to not make the same mistakes that the presidents of Penn, Harvard and MIT did. A lot of the pain and anguish that their commentary has brought can—and should—have been easily avoidable with a well-thought-out communications strategy that takes the full stakeholder universe into account.

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



TJ White

PR brief

FGS Global defends Wyndham against Choice's Raid

FGS Global represents Wyndham Hotels & Resorts as it confirms receipt of Choice Hotels International's Dec. 12 takeover bid, which it says looks a lot like the same "highly conditional offer" of \$86 per share that the board already rejected on Nov. 14.

Wyndham believes the bid presents an "asymmetrical risk to Wyndham shareholders given the uncertainty around antitrust approval."

The offer undervalues "Wyndham's superior, standalone growth prospects."

The targeted company also pointed out that Choice "owns less than 1.7 percent of Wyndham common stock and conceded they are restricted from further purchases without antitrust approval."

Consistent with its fiduciary duties, Wyndham promised to advise shareholders of its recommendation regarding the offer within ten business days.

Wyndham's 9,100 hotels include the Travelodge, LaQuinta, Days Inn and Wyndham units. Choice operates the Radisson, Quality Inn, Clarion, Sleep Inn and Comfort brands.

FGS Global's Danya Al-Qattan, Paul Scarpetta and Stephen Pettibone represent Wyndham.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher's Andy Brimmer, Kelly Sullivan and Allison Sobel represent Choice Hotels.



INFINITE
GLOBAL

We are an international communications firm advising ambitious, complex organizations.

We provide the experience, skills and insight to drive your brand forward or, in special situations, deploy the strategies to defend you from reputational risk.

PR | Content & Campaigns | Crisis & Litigation | Digital



SAN FRANCISCO | NEW YORK | LONDON | LOS ANGELES | CHICAGO | WASHINGTON, D.C.

WWW.INFINITEGLOBAL.COM

The transformative power of strategic acquisitions

Agency acquisitions can be an important part of a holistic growth strategy and can also prove to be a potent business move in an evolving industry landscape.

By Kimberly Eberl

For PR agency owners navigating today's fast-paced world, keeping ahead of the curve requires more than just innovation. This is why many independent, mid-sized agencies like mine are making acquisition part of their multi-faceted growth strategy.

According to Dave Sheehan, Managing Partner at Athru Partners, "High-performing agencies (those growing 30 percent year-over-year) have found that adding M&A as one of the key pillars in their business development plans has been critical to accelerating growth."

As the owner of an integrated agency in Chicago, I've come to appreciate the profound impact that acquiring other agencies can have on bolstering market presence and catalyzing growth. I've learned how a business-building tactic that had once been the domain of "big" agencies can also be employed by much smaller shops as part of a holistic growth strategy.

Below are some broad strategies to help guide agency owners who may be considering acquisitions in 2024.

Keeping balance on a shifting landscape

The PR industry is in a state of constant evolution, with emerging technologies, changing consumer behaviors and dynamic market trends perpetually reshaping the playing field. In such an environment, adaptability is key, and the strategic acquisition of complementary agencies can be the key to securing a competitive edge.

In an industry as dynamic as ours, standing still is akin to moving backward. You have to always be thinking ahead. When you look at your portfolio of clients, it's not always easy to know which ones will stay and which will go.

Just as financial advisors often recommend a "diversified" approach to investing, the same principle applies to your client portfolio. You can instantly broaden your client base by acquiring the right agency business, diffusing the potential negative impact of any one client loss.

I'm habitually seeking growth opportunities and that includes strategic acquisitions to ensure my agency remains well-balanced and well-positioned for the unknown.

Building up your expertise

One of the best reasons for thinking acquisitively in 2024 is the potential for building expertise. Every agency has a unique set of skills, talents and core competencies. By

strategically acquiring agencies with complementary strengths, you can supercharge your strengths in a way that makes you stand out as a leader.

A strategic acquisition can turn a core competency into a superpower via the addition of a specialized workforce. That might mean additional bandwidth to take on more of the work you're good at or more brainpower to push the limits of what your agency is capable of.

Broadening your service offering

At a time when clients are increasingly in search of one-stop solutions, your breadth of services can play a critical role in client acquisition, retention and satisfaction. Acquiring agencies with specialized/supplemental skills can help you broaden your service offerings, providing clients with an expanded suite of solutions.

Clients today are looking for quality, efficiency and simplicity, which means finding partners who can seamlessly integrate numerous aspects of a marketing strategy. Acquisitions enable specialized agencies to evolve into multi-disciplinary solutions providers, meeting the evolving demands of the market.

With this in mind, first consider the things you're doing well, then make a wish list of those services you'd offer your clients if you could. Seek acquisition targets with proven expertise in these areas to broaden your offering, then make sure everyone knows about it.

Expanding your geographic footprint

With the digital era eroding geographical boundaries, acquisitions can be a great way to establish a local presence in new markets, diversifying your client base and expanding your reach.

In a globalized world, having a localized presence can be the difference between winning or losing—or *keeping* or losing—a lucrative piece of business. Acquiring agencies in strategic locations not only opens new doors for new business but also enhances the agency's cultural intelligence, a crucial factor in today's interconnected marketplace.

But geographic expansion isn't without its challenges. You can't simply absorb staff from across state lines or begin servicing newly acquired clients from a distance. There will also be brick and mortar to operate, so you'll likely need to hire a managing director to work on-site and help facilitate

the integration of agency teams. But the long-term value in terms of market exposure can be well worth the work.

Anticipating changes in the market

As the marketing world evolves, agencies must change the way they function and position themselves. Over the past couple of decades, we've seen transitions from print- and broadcast-heavy campaign generation to an emphasis on digital/online marketing, and now to a social-first mindset. These changes can require significant restaffing and retooling to better meet our clients' evolving needs.

Evolutionary operational refinements can be aided and expedited by strategic acquisition, buying the expertise you don't have sooner than later and thereby positioning yourself ahead of the curve. Look at where the world is going.

Anticipate the needs of your clients two or three years down the road. Evaluate your ability to meet those needs with the agency you have now. Any glaring gaps can represent areas for growth through acquisition.

Navigating challenges with experience

While the benefits of acquisitions are significant, it's important not to lose sight of the challenges that can come with integrating diverse teams, cultures and operations. Successfully navigating these challenges requires a nuanced approach and expertise that can come only with experience. For those new to acquisitions, finding and relying on an experienced mentor, as I have, can make a world of difference.

One thing I've learned from personal experience with numerous transactions over the years is that the art of successful acquisitions lies in understanding the cultural nuances of the agencies you acquire and having a well-thought-out integration strategy. Acquisition expertise isn't just about financial negotiations; it's about fostering a collaborative environment that allows the strengths of each agency to shine.

Future-proofing your agency

Strategic acquisitions aren't just about surviving, they're about leading the change and charting a course for the future. Embracing acquisitive opportunities requires a blend of foresight, adaptability and follow-through. But in a rapidly evolving world where the only constant is change, thinking acquisitively isn't just a strong business move—it could be a strategic imperative.

Kimberly Eberl is Founder and CEO of Motion, based in Chicago. ○



Kimberly Eberl



**Because
risk obeys
no rules.
Rule it
with data.**

**DATA-DRIVEN
CRISIS & ISSUES
INTELLIGENCE**

World Class Counsel,
360° Risk Expertise

Misinformation Defense
& Brand Safety

Issues Forecasting &
Preemptive Planning

A.I. Powered
Rapid Response

Turning a crisis into a win

Several recent PR crises provide valuable lessons on ways that PR professionals can respond to a crisis and achieve outcomes that lead to business success.

By Curtis Sparrer

What do Anheuser-Busch and Twisted Sister frontman Dee Snider have in common? Both were at the center of two PR crises in 2023. The difference is one crisis turned into a win while the other ... not so much. But both offer lessons to learn from as well.

Arguably the biggest PR crisis of the year was when Anheuser-Busch, the parent company of beer giant Bud Light, came under fire for its partnership with trans social media influencer Dylan Mulvaney. Conservative audiences expressed their aversion to the collaboration by making transphobic remarks, calling for a boycott of the brand and even going as far as threatening to bomb one of its factories.

The immense backlash led to Anheuser-Busch releasing statements that didn't help matters. In fact, it only alienated its core customer base further, as well as the LGBTQ+ community. Here's a snippet from one of the statements:

"We never intended to be part of a discussion that divides people. We are in the business of bringing people together over a beer. My time serving this country taught me the importance of accountability and the values upon which America was founded: freedom, hard work and respect for one another."

If this vague statement from Anheuser-Busch's CEO failed to resonate with you, you're not alone. Even in its entirety, at no point did Anheuser-Busch denounce boycotters' actions, defend Dylan against the hate she received or even say what the company was taking accountability for. It didn't do anything, unless you count making everyone more upset. And, most tellingly, sales kept falling.

Now, let's look at a crisis that ended differently.

This past summer, clothing retailer Adidas released a swimsuit collection for Pride month that featured male models wearing female swimsuits. This sparked social-media controversy, wherein users criticized Adidas for seemingly erasing women from its campaign.

But instead of reneging on its stance amid the criticisms or issuing a "non-statement" statement, Adidas stood ten toes down on the campaign. This was its response to *USA Today*:

"[Adidas is] one of the first brands to work

in partnership with the LGBTQ+ community and the Mnisi collection was designed to celebrate freedom of self-expression in sports and culture. This is reflected in a diverse line of models who bring the spirit of this collection to life."

This statement earned Adidas praise for being inclusive even when facing backlash.

The response makes a difference

Both brands dealt with similar problems, but only one came out unscathed. And that's, at least in part, due to how it responded. (Granted, you can argue Bud Light's audience has been a tougher crowd politically.) When navigating crisis communications for clients, it's not just about mitigating the crisis but responding in a way that shows the public where a company stands and the actions it plans to take afterward. And that starts with a good approach.

A coordinated approach to crisis management will allow PR pros to maneuver even the most unexpected crises. They can do this by assessing the situation, determining the likely outcomes for each potential course of action and delivering the best results to protect a company's reputation and, ultimately, its business.

This approach recently allowed my team to successfully overcome a crisis that could've been disastrous.

Assess the situation

My Bospar team tapped Snider to breathe new life into San Francisco Pride in order to generate excitement and bridge the gap between straight and LGBTQ+ people. Unfortunately, Snider displayed anti-trans rhetoric on Twitter a few days before we were going to reveal he would be the face of San Francisco Pride 2023, effectively sending us into a crisis. But instead of allowing it to deter our plans, we decided to put a crisis plan in motion, starting with assessing the situation.

Taking stock of a crisis sets the tone for what should happen next. After all, you won't know where you need to go until you figure out where you are. Assess the situation by asking questions like: What happened? How dangerous is the situation? And what are you doing about it?

In our case, we knew what happened: Snider offended the LGBTQ+ community just as he was about to be featured in one of the most prominent LGBTQ+ events of the year. We also knew how dangerous it was:

Involving Snider without acknowledging his comments would lead to backlash and possibly less support when we needed all the support we could get. And, most importantly, we knew what we needed to do: Get Snider to apologize.

Determine potential outcomes

After assessing the situation, the next step is to determine potential outcomes. That means not just deciding on one crisis strategy, but determining what happens if something goes wrong. You need a plan A through Z. Planning for every possible outcome will leave you less likely to be caught off guard.

For us, canceling San Francisco Pride wasn't an option, so we knew getting Snider to apologize would determine the rest of our crisis strategy. If he publicly admitted his error, we could execute our campaign as planned and possibly deliver better results since we now have a redemption narrative. If he refused, we would share why he was dropped and pivot to a new focus: fundraising.

Deliver the best results to protect company reputation

Lastly, any approach to a crisis should be in the company's best interest. If a brand's reputation took a substantial hit, there was a misstep somewhere. Although sometimes it's unavoidable to be the "bad guy" in a crisis, being accountable and turning it into something positive can go a long way for a company's reputation.

Our goal with this crisis was to ensure San Francisco Pride occurred regardless of Snider's involvement. Ultimately, Snider refused to apologize and we mutually agreed to part ways. But instead of pointing fingers, we used it as a teachable moment for allyship.

This statement gained media traction, and we used the attention to our advantage by pushing our fundraising efforts to the forefront. The results were a renewed excitement in San Francisco Pride, exceeded fundraising goals and a satisfied client.

Crisis communications come with PR territory, but the wrong move can be the difference between recovery and lasting damage. By assessing the situation, determining potential outcomes and delivering the best results to protect company reputation, PR professionals can better respond to crises and get an outcome that leads to business success.

Curtis Sparrer is co-Founder and Principal at Bospar. ○



Curtis Sparrer



LONGACRE
SQUARE



Customized Strategies. Winning Outcomes.

Trusted to deliver specialized counsel
and execution when the stakes are highest.

- **Corporate Governance and Shareholder Activism**
- **M&A and Transactions**
- **Financial Institutions and Investment Funds**
- **Corporate Positioning and Investor Relations**
- **Crisis and Special Situations**

New York

44 West 37th Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10018

West Palm Beach

700 S Rosemary Ave, Suite 204
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Dallas

100 Crescent Court, 7th Floor
Dallas, TX 75201

Washington D.C.

44 West 37th Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10018

Leadership from the bottom up, not the top down

Why a commitment to bring about positive change in a divided world starts at the local level.

Robert L. Dilenschneider

It's stating the obvious to say that our nation, politically speaking, is more divided now than it has been for many decades and that this divisiveness is at its worst in Washington.

Even something as obvious and imperative as approving the annual budget on time seems beyond Congress' capacity, much less crafting legislation on really challenging issues like, say, immigration reform and regulating artificial intelligence.

Our country needs changes. Changes that reduce the anger and hostility that infect the political realm. Changes that restore confidence in America's future. Changes that rebuild the trust that's a fundamental part of any successful society: trust in our democratic system, trust in one another.

The question is, who will bring about these all-important changes? Who will give us the leadership?

The answer isn't our national elected officials. This isn't because they're all caught up in the current Washington warfare. We have many public officeholders, including appointees and career civil servants, who want to put the dysfunction behind them and help solve the nation's problems. But they're stopped cold by the partisanship that paralyzes the Capital. And they're stymied by the loss of confidence in the political system and the frustration that sours public opinion.

Washington has brought itself—and the nation—to a near standstill. People see this and despair spreads, often with fatal consequences. Think of the alarming number of suicides every year and the countless deaths through drug addiction and alcoholism.

So, here's what I think is necessary: We must go outside the existing political structure and get leaders in communities across the U.S. to start talking about and encouraging positive changes in our society. If the ability to get the nation moving again can't come from the top down, then it has to come from the bottom up, from the local level.

A pipe dream? In fact, it's happened before. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, monopolies, trusts and rapacious businessmen were in the process of taking over the nation's economy and controlling

the government. Then a grassroots counterforce that became known as the Progressive Movement sprang up. The movement eventually found national leaders, most famously Teddy Roosevelt. But the point is that the energy and passion behind it came from the public at large. People getting aroused and committing themselves to reform can make a difference.

I'm convinced this could happen again, because the American people themselves haven't changed all that much. They still love their country, they still care about their communities, they still value neighborly cooperation, they still volunteer for community service, they still give to charities and they still believe that serious differences can be worked out.

Yes, there are many hotheads out there, pumping their bile into the mainstream. And yes, a lot of that anger is inflamed by biased media and self-serving politicians who use hate and fear to win votes. And yes, conspiracy theorists have, thanks to all the new forms of communication, whole new ways of feeding their poisonous delusions into the public realm.

But when all is said and done, the hate-and-fear mongers are a minority. The vast majority of Americans are sensible, decent and patriotic.

They come together regularly in their neighborhoods and communities in many different ways. Church groups, chambers of commerce, Lions, Rotarians, Elks, Masons, American Legionnaires, the Red Hats women's clubs—the list goes on. Don't forget hobbies and sports as unifying forces, too, like softball and bowling leagues, gardening and automobile clubs—even that hot new game of pickleball. Again, the list goes on.

Clearly, the folks who get together in these many forums have plenty of differences among them—political, social, religious, whatever it may be. And yet they can relax, agree to disagree and get along just fine.

What we need now is for all that comity to rise to the next level. When they come together in these various venues, folks need to say, "Let's put the things we disagree on behind us and focus on the things where we see eye to eye."

Then let's reach out to others who feel the same way—there are all kinds of new communication methods and social platforms to do that—and raise our collective voices to demand action.

Now, this will sometimes mean exerting pressure on the people who are running for political offices. Not all the changes America needs require government action, but many will. For example, we can't deal with the homelessness and the shortage of affordable housing that plague so many communities without some degree of government involvement. But that's fine—it's how the Progressive Movement succeeded, for example, with popular opinion compelling political responses and new laws and policies.

The concern, of course, is that once politicians get into the picture, the same old negativity and partisanship will take hold. But that's not inevitable, at least not if enough people coalesce and keep demanding positive change and real action.

What will get people at the local level talking, agreeing and exerting leadership? That's the dilemma, because if there's going to be a grassroots movement in this country, it has to come from, yes, the grassroots. It's not something some leader can impose. But there have been leaderless movements in history, lots of them.

I'm reminded of the story about a 19th-century French politician who jumped up and rushed out of the room when he saw a large, excited crowd stream past the window. "There go the people," he cried out. "I must follow them, for I am their leader."

I'm not looking for anything quite that dramatic. But if enough Americans in enough communities can demand action on the fundamental challenges facing our nation, then they'll be the real leaders who motivate the supposed leaders to follow them.

Robert L. Dilenschneider is the Founder and CEO of The Dilenschneider Group, an international communications firm. ●



Robert
Dilenschneider

Moments
of impact
don't just
happen.

Together,
we create
them.

Berlin Rosen

berlinrosen.com

Advertising /

Branding /

Communications planning /

Content development /

Crisis management /

Cultural Competency /

DEI Consulting /

Graphic design /

Influencer Engagement /

Inclusive Marketing /

Media training & coaching /

Message development /

Public affairs /

Public relations /

Scenario planning /

Social media /

Video production /



What to do when you're the target of misinformation

Several proactive management tactics that can help prepare an organization to manage and respond to misinformation.

By Kendell Fitter and Deirdre Walsh

The spread of false and misleading claims has long challenged corporations of all sizes and industries. Whether it's whisper campaigns amongst competitors with malicious intent, or rampant negative product reviews on TikTok from a misinformed customer, misinformation and disinformation can have a material impact on a business. Despite some efforts to help curb the spread of these claims, the issue shows no signs of slowing down.

As generative artificial intelligence becomes further integrated into everyday life, the problem of distorted narratives is becoming more sophisticated and even more widespread. We see it in the form of political parties leveraging AI to create "warning videos" of what the world would look like if an opposing party secured re-election and sophisticated users generating convincing propagation of their claims in the form of news reporting, reviews and whistleblowing. In general, it has become more and more challenging for everyday users to decipher what's real—and can be verified—and what's fabricated.

As these tools become more powerful, even with increased safeguards and legislation, it's important that companies prepare themselves to identify, mitigate and respond to false claims. The proactive management of these issues can prevent a small issue from escalating to a crisis with long-term reputational impact.

As companies impose their own safeguards, they should consider the following tactics:

Implement a tracking system and determine levers for escalation. Equip your communications and/or social teams with the right tools to track mentions of your company, as well as your competitors and industry, so you can be aware of and prepare for the potential impacts of an industry-wide issue. With monitoring tools in place, ensure your team also has the right data inflection points to help them determine when they might escalate an issue of concern to leadership. Advanced tracking tools and an escalation plan are fundamental for a communications team, particularly given the growing sophistication of AI tools.

Establish a publicly available resource hub for key stakeholders. A dedicated

hub of questions and answers on company-owned channels can save your team time and energy when managing both customer and media inquiries. It also will demonstrate that this information was created proactively and not just in reaction to an emerging issue. The resource hub will allow you to quickly counter any claims by pointing inquirers to the hub and ensure that your answers are consistent and discoverable.

Verify leadership social accounts. Executives—especially CEOs without verified and optimized digital profiles—are reputationally vulnerable. With threats of online impersonation and the spread of misinformation rising, particularly with AI, optimized digital profiles become especially important when facing critical issues. Social media is a key information driver in critical moments, making it more important than ever for executives to have verifiable, owned and updated online profiles.

Determine key spokespeople and conduct media training and preparation. When we work with our clients, the goal is always to manage an issue before it escalates to the point of requiring a company spokesperson to get involved. That said, it's important to identify spokespeople and train them to represent the company should the need arise. On-camera practice with key company messaging and questions and answers, as well as recommendations on how to engage with the media and other key stakeholders, is an effective way to arm your spokespeople with the tools to confidently speak to the media and key stakeholders amidst critical moments.

Identify third-party advocates to bolster your narrative. While it's important for a company to tell its own story, it can be incredibly additive to leverage third-party voices to amplify your narrative. Whether that support comes from industry experts, employees, partners or other key stakeholders, it's critical that a company continually cultivates those advocates. This includes having third-party testimonials in place on owned channels or ready and available to disseminate at the right moment.

In today's environment, it's a matter of "when" not "if" you or your company will be faced with false claims and misrepresentation of the facts. Implementing the

tactics above, in addition to developing a communications plan that considers the most prominent risks your company faces, will better prepare you to navigate and counter the spread of inaccurate information so that your stakeholders know where the truth lies.

Whether your company seeks to prepare against the proliferation of misinformation or is facing false claims amidst the increasingly unstable macroeconomic and social environment, H/Advisors Abernathy can support you in protecting your business and mitigating reputational damage while returning your organization to normal.

Kendell Fitter is Managing Director and Head of the Crisis practice at H/Advisors Abernathy. Deirdre Walsh is Vice President at H/Advisors Abernathy. ○



Kendell Fitter



Deirdre Walsh

PR brief

SKDK rolls out 10/7 Project

New York's SKDK is handling the 10/7 Project backed by five Jewish organizations as a centralized communications operation designed to promote continued US support for Israel and counter misinformation about the Israel/Hamas war.

The 10/7 Project says it will ensure more "complete and accurate information" about the Israeli and Hamas war in real time for US policymakers and the American public.

It will mount an aggressive rapid response effort to challenge untruths and retell the story about the butchery of the Oct 7 attack and make outcasts of 10/7 deniers.

The 10/7 Project, which has launched a website and newsletter, also will shine a bright light on the more than 100 hostages who are still held by Hamas.

American Jewish Committee, Jewish Federations of North America, ADL (the Anti-Defamation League), American Israel Public Affairs Committee and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations set up the 10/7 Project.

Ted Deutch, CEO of the AJC, said since the Oct. 7 attack on Israel "there has been a concerted and consistent effort from Israel's enemies to draw a false and dangerous equivalence between Hamas' deadly rampage to destroy the Jewish state and Israel's right to defend itself against terrorists."

Deutch added that 10/7 Project's goal is to be a source of trusted information and to combat false narratives perpetuated by terrorists who were responsible for the deaths of 1,200 Israeli civilians.



Go from hair-on-fire to head held high

Avoq (formerly Subject Matter+Kivvit) is with you at every moment of a crisis, with unique data insights to help you navigate your path ahead. Because data is the key to keeping you informed. Influencing your decisions. And delivering the confidence you need to move forward. Reach out to make sure everyone's prepared next time a crisis hits. Learn more by reading our own Maura Farrell and Patrick Kerley's piece on "*How Data Gives Crisis Communicators Insights into What's Around the Corner*" in this issue.

Avoq.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.

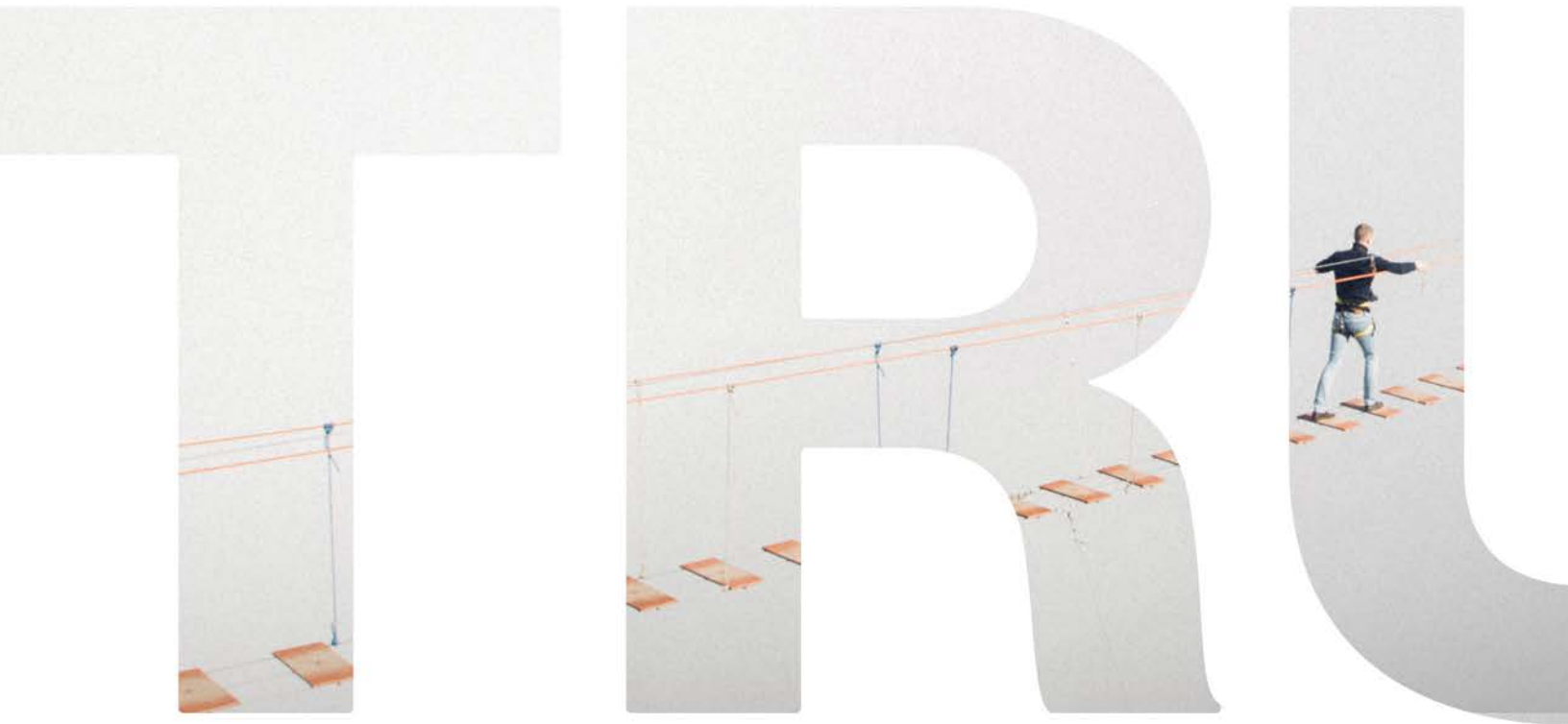
CHICAGO

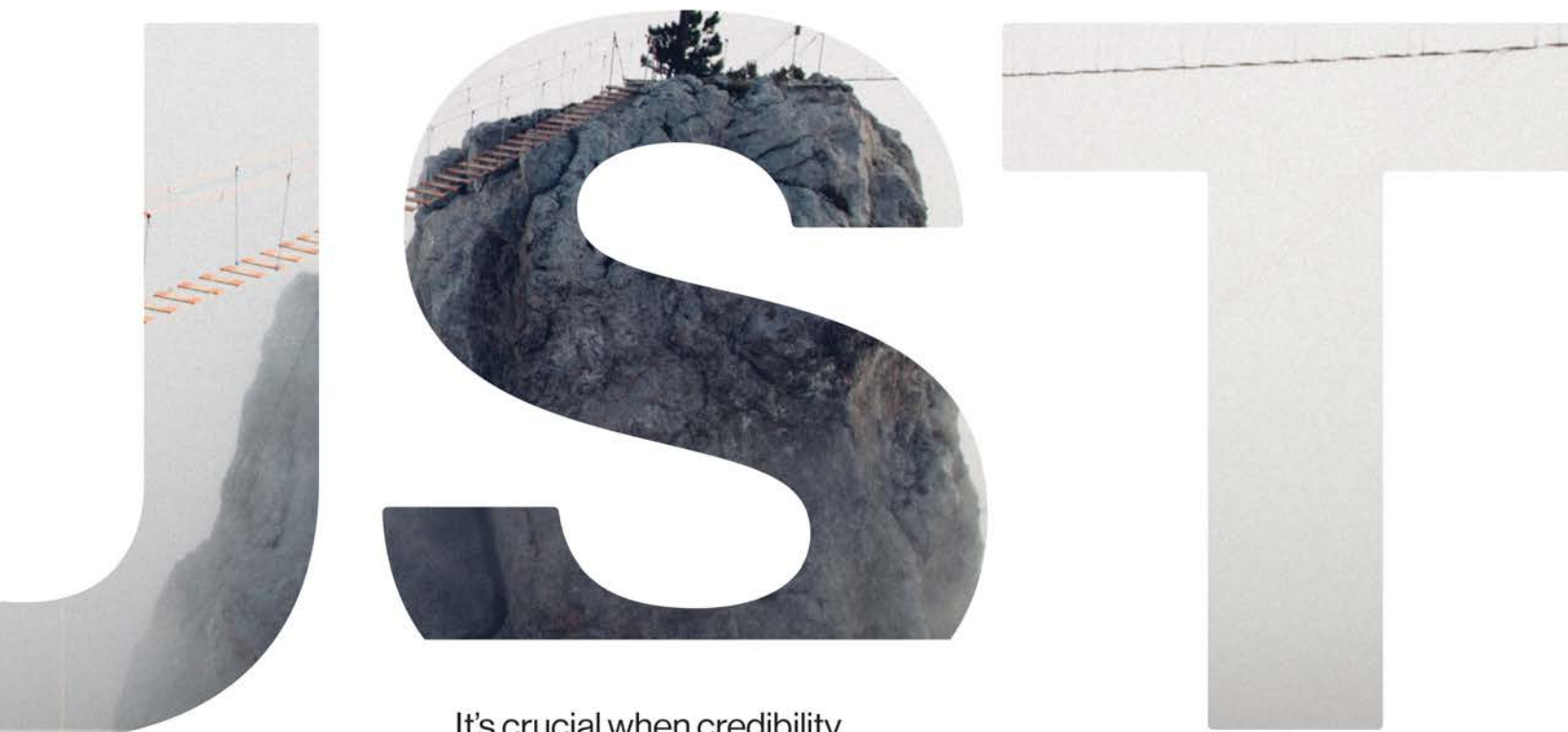
NEW JERSEY

NEW YORK

MIAMI

Avōq





It's crucial when credibility
is questioned.

It's the best insurance against
competitive disruption and
consumer indifference.

It's what our 6000 experts
help companies and brands
earn every day.

The shifting landscape of brand purpose

Not all pressing issues require corporate voice! Brand stewards must ask why and when their brands should engage, or if they need to engage on a particular issue at all.

By Amy Terpeluk

When companies stumble on product quality, commit messaging mishaps, or have ethical shortcomings laid bare, the news media is never far from the controversy. Many of these stories are about disparities and discrimination that cause community pain—pitting customers against companies. Often, the drumbeat of news reporting is so loud that it cannot be ignored—day after day leading the news cycle. It can feel endless and all-consuming.

The importance of these stories isn't lost on consumers, who increasingly see corporate social responsibility and brand purpose as front-of-mind purchase considerations. Consequently, it has become critical for companies to ascertain the consumer's pulse and understand the public expectations of how iconic brands take on the challenges of our time.

"Catchy" is a poor substitute for championing a cause. Not all pressing issues require a corporate voice! Brand stewards must consider what issues are essential for their companies to engage on. Before leaping to the clarion call, they must ask why and when their brands should engage, or if they need to engage on a particular issue at all. To answer these questions, brand managers must carefully consider if an issue aligns with their products and purpose and how closely the issues at hand impact their consumers.

Sometimes corporate response to emerging issues is reflexive. But creating social impact isn't about jumping into a headline-grabbing topic unadvisedly. Corporate action is a statement of commitment and is translated as an ongoing pledge to remain in the trenches long-term. Speaking out on trending issues that do not relate to the brand's identity can offend, causing consumers to view the company's executives as opportunists or disloyal to brand values.

We have seen how ill-informed public commentary and campaigns have dire consequences—a tipping point to customer, employee and stakeholder backlash. We have also seen the ire brands face when they neglect to take a stance on issues they have long claimed to champion.

Creating enduring social impact that cements customer ties to a brand requires a deeper understanding of how issues in-

tersect with the company's mission and values. The FINN Purpose Alignment Study underscores the importance of research in gauging the relationship between brand, customer and cause. This study offers a metric enabling brand stewards to navigate the evolving landscape of brand purpose and how organizations can align communications priorities to social impact.

The importance of pricing and performance

There is no surprise that consumer purchasing decisions are driven by price and product performance. It stands to reason that in a highly competitive market—and at times of economic uncertainty—consumers prioritize product purchases around affordable quality.

It is in the company's best interest to establish pricing strategies that are market-competitive, transparent and consistent. Consumers appreciate brands prioritizing fair pricing practices, fostering trust and long-term loyalty. But there is more to brand sustainability.

What happens when price and performance are comparable between two brands? How then, does a consumer choose between what are seemingly equals? This is when companies cannot overlook purpose-related factors.

The rise of social impact factors

Beyond immediate benefits, price, performance and product attributes, consumers now value the societal value of their purchase. This is an expansive shift in consumer consciousness toward more holistic considerations when making a purchase.

The FINN Purpose Alignment Study highlighted six social impact factors that ranked among the top 20 brand purpose sub-factors most important to consumers. These factors indicate a growing consumer demand for brands to actively contribute to society and the environment. By aligning themselves with social and environmental causes, brands secure an opportunity to connect with consumers who prioritize sustainability and corporate social responsibility as buying factors.

The study identified that in an era of heightened scrutiny on ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) reporting practices and the return on business bot-

tom line, social impact aspects are crucial consumer inflection points. Companies that integrate sustainable practices, authentically support aligned social causes and exhibit ethical business conduct have a competitive advantage in capturing the attention and loyalty of socially conscious consumers. Among the social impact ranking factors, keeping customer data private and secure, and operating in a trustworthy way rank higher than new features and product innovation.

Consumers want to associate themselves with brands that have a positive public image and are seen as trustworthy and reliable. They see where they spend their money as a reflection of their personal values.

New paradigm in marketing strategy

The study's findings may have significant implications for companies' marketing strategies. Brands must carefully craft messaging and campaigns to reflect the evolving consumer priorities in brand purpose. It is essential to highlight the economic benefits and value offered by products while simultaneously showcasing brand commitment to social impact and sustainability in equal measure.

The goal for brand stewards must be to connect with consumers on a deeper, emotional level. Sharing stories and initiatives related to environmental conservation, community engagement and ethical sourcing can enhance consumers' perception of a brand and foster a sense of purpose among consumers. When consumers and brands are aligned in purpose, they share the understanding that by working together to address pressing societal concerns, they are in harmony.

Embracing brand purpose and telling that story can be a competitive advantage in fostering consumer loyalty, enhancing reputation, and contributing to a more sustainable and socially responsible future.

It's beyond debate; purpose is good business.

Amy Terpeluk is Managing Partner at Finn Partners. ○



Amy Terpeluk

“In the trenches,
on the field,
in a boardroom
or a courtroom,
on the front page,
or online,
You want TLG in your corner.”



A STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT FIRM WITH A GLOBAL REACH
WASHINGTON D.C. | NEW YORK | LONDON | www.tlgcommunications.com

When it's time to sell your PR agency

How PR agency owners can navigate the M&A process in a way that yields a rewarding experience for both owners and the teams they leave behind.

By Rich Jachetti

Growth is the primary reason why most PR agency owners engage The Stevens Group. They come to us for M&A consultation and for help finding them a buyer who has the resources they need to take their firm to a new level, both financially and for gaining access to new vertical markets they've tried to break into with no success.

We also work with many PR agency owners whose primary focus for wanting to sell their firm is to exit their agency with a healthy payday for themselves and a satisfying financial and cultural fit for their team.

After years of working with PR agency owners whose eye is on an exit, we know that selling the firm they founded and built can be a bittersweet experience. Sure, while the monetary rewards can be significant, relinquishing ownership of their pride and joy can be a disorienting and emotionally taxing experience.

Fortunately, with well-thought-out planning and a smart pre-and-post sales strategy, agency owners can make ceding control of their firm a satisfying and rewarding experience both for themselves and for the team they leave behind. Equally important, selling their business means monetizing one of the owner's most valuable assets, if not the most. The price they get from a buyer for their firm can set the stage for the owner's quality of life after she or he has walked out the door of the new owner's firm for the last time.

Reflect and plan, then reflect and plan some more

Perhaps the most essential rule I urge any PR agency owner who decides it's time to sell and call it quits is to take all the time they need to seriously reflect on what she or he wants to do with their life post sale.

To that end, what follows are some considerations for exit sellers to ponder:

Outline your vision: Before the sales process starts, carefully take the time to define your vision for what life will look like after the ink dries on the contract. Be sure to factor in both your professional and personal goals. Do you want to start a new venture? Or just take the time you need to relax and enjoy the well-deserved time off? Having a well-considered vision of your post-sale future will help immensely during what can be a disquieting, often drawn-out sales process.

Ensure your financial stability: Consider hiring a professional advisor you trust to help you sensibly handle the earnings from the sale of your firm. Some people use the money from the sale to diversify their investment portfolios. Others develop a financial safety net and set a budget that aligns with their intended post-sale lifestyle. Having a prudent budgeting strategy post-sale helps provide direction and peace of mind as you head down the anxiety-ridden path of selling your firm.

Stay involved: Work together with the acquiring agency's management team. Get to know them. Swap ideas, insights and experiences. Share your future perspective on the direction in which you would like to see the firm go if you were to continue running it. After all, who knows more about your firm and your team than you? Ask the buyer's team to share their thoughts with you. This step can help facilitate a smooth transition process.

Prioritize 'you': Take this rare opportunity to rediscover or find hobbies and interests you may have put on the back burner during your long run as a busy agency owner. Perhaps you would like to spend more time with family and friends, travel the world, buy a villa in Italy, take up a hobby, exercise more, learn a new language ... you get the idea. Planning to dedicate time to the things you enjoy most in life will help shift the focus away from the tedium of the deal process to the reasons why you chose to sell your firm and exit in the first place.

Explore new professional opportunities: If you still have that entrepreneurial itch, consider delving into new business ventures. Your experience running a PR firm has taught you many lessons you can apply to a wide range of other business ventures. Or maybe you can work out an arrangement with the new owner to continue providing of-counsel services to the new owners ... for a fee.

Network and build relationships: Take the time you now have to use your professional connections and network to foster new relationships and explore opportunities that bubble up serendipitously. Attend relevant industry events, join advisory boards or serve in mentorship roles. You can also consider dedicating volunteer hours to support peers or non-profit organizations. This approach can help you stay

connected to the business world and maybe even lead to new doors opening.

The bottom line

Indeed, we've worked with dozens of PR agency owners who had already taken many of the steps outlined here before contacting The Stevens Group. But we also know many agency owners who hadn't taken the time necessary to think through this pivotal life-changing move in their life quite enough.

I don't think we have to tell you that selling your PR firm is a significant milestone in a PR agency owner's life. It's a period filled with mixed emotions. But when done thoughtfully, selling your firm as an exit strategy can open the door to a brand-new chapter in your life. With careful planning, you can find your way through the M&A process and the aftermath of your post-sale life with a smile on your face.

Rich Jachetti is Partner at The Stevens Group, PR agency mergers and acquisitions consultants and facilitators. ○



Rich Jachetti

PR brief

Teneo handles Nippon Steel takeover of USS

Teneo is handling Nippon Steel Corp. as it acquires United States Steel Corp. for \$14.9 billion as part of its strategy to add steel-making capacity in "districts and areas where demand is promisingly expected to grow."

The transaction follows NSC's acquisitions in India and Thailand as it seeks to achieve its goal of producing 100M tons of steel per year. With USS, NSC's capacity hits the 86M mark.

NSC president Eiji Hashimoto said his company "has long admired USS with deep respect for its advanced technologies, rich history and talented workforce." His company is committed to honoring all agreements with USS' existing union contracts.

NSC's \$55 per share offer represents a 40 percent premium over USS' Dec. 15 closing stock price. The transaction is expected to close in the second or third quarter of 2024.

Robert Mead, Teneo Americas chairman, heads the NSC team that includes senior managing directors Monika Driscoll and Tucker Elcock.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher's Kelly Sullivan and Ed Trissel represent USS.

PReempt their next move.



sachsmedia.com | 850.222.1996

Public Relations | Public Affairs | Research | Crisis | Digital

SachsMEDIA
THE BREAKTHROUGH AGENCY.

Communications' role in supporting a litigation strategy

How to implement effective litigation communications strategies in times of tumult.

By Eric Andrus

The court of public opinion can affect an enterprise's reputation and ongoing business prospects just as much as actual court proceedings. Given today's tumultuous business climate and a political environment constantly impacted by global wars and brewing conflicts, the role of communications in supporting a legal strategy has taken on an outsized importance. In this era of hot takes, disinformation and over-heated rhetoric—and amid a rising distrust in the media, government and societal institutions—every enterprise's key stakeholders seek assurance, accurate information and empathy on all fronts. A business and its legal counsel must navigate rapidly emerging legal issues—from class action lawsuits and litigation salvos from competitors to regulatory investigations and contractual disputes—and take even greater care in crafting public statements, internal announcements and litigation-related filings that could attract media interest.

In such a fraught landscape for enterprises of all sizes, here are a few key considerations when developing a communications strategy to support a client's legal strategy:

Tone is critical: All messaging in court filings must be aligned with the times and aligned with the substance and tone of other corporate messaging. This may mean adjusting certain assertions and language that could be deemed insensitive in light of global events. If business goals or corporate marketing and other outreach strategies have been altered due to COVID-19, for instance, any legal filings should reflect updated corporate messaging as appropriate, or at least not contradict it.

Written words matter: Now that legal proceedings have returned to in-person settings, the media covering them may still be relying on web video, audio and/or electronic filings. It's always best practice to draft legal filings that convey your position in a manner that's compelling, clear and user-friendly to reporters.

Fewer outlets and fewer court reporters: It has never been more crucial to take the time necessary to truly tailor a pitch about a legal matter to individual reporters and their specific approaches and areas of interest. Given consolidation among—or staff reductions at—national business media outlets and the closing of many local news

platforms, fewer reporters may be covering legal issues and still fewer may be assigned to the courts where a client's legal proceedings will occur. This challenge requires more in-depth research to identify journalists who may be interested in your client's legal matter, while also making it harder to attract coverage if that's the desired strategy.

On the other hand, the shrinking number of news outlets and journalists may increase the likelihood that a client's legal development falls under the media's radar and doesn't receive meaningful coverage. Today's legal media environment may work in your favor if this is a client's desired outcome. However, because social media may provide unwelcome public exposure with no warning that could quickly ignite traditional media attention, it's always best to plan for the worst possible outcome—including incoming inquiries from traditional media outlets—while hoping for the best.

Maintain privilege and confidentiality: Given the propensity of leaks via social media platforms, communications professionals must ensure that all relevant materials and correspondence with in-house and external legal counsel are appropriately marked to preserve privilege. Additionally, given the greater numbers of employees working remotely on less-than-secure Wi-Fi connections, assume that confidential documents and emails could leak and draft and distribute documents with appropriate amounts of care.

Plan, yet be nimble: Effective litigations communications requires anticipating the next steps in the legal process as well as other unrelated corporate issues that may attract increased scrutiny from regulators, the media and the public. For these expected developments, businesses should prepare appropriate messaging and communications materials in advance. But at a time when the future is so uncertain and business goals, tactics and strategies could change quickly, enterprises must also be able to nimbly respond to new concerns and developments as they arise. Moreover, real-time coordination and cooperation between operations, legal and communications teams will be paramount for the foreseeable future.

Communications strategy surrounding litigation has an increasing potential to significantly shape a company's reputation

among its key stakeholders and impact its future course. To be effective, communications professionals must incorporate the ways in which audiences, information sharing, court procedures and the news cycle are changing as conflict and unrest are on the rise.

KARV has deep experience in designing and implementing strategic communications programs that support a client's litigation strategy. With 2024 looking to be chock full of uncertainty, change and challenges, we remain ready to support clients as they navigate any and all types of legal situations.

Eric Andrus is Executive Vice President at KARV, a strategic and communications advisory firm specializing in issues management, corporate communications, litigation support, and crisis communications with offices in New York City and Los Angeles. ○



Eric Andrus

PR brief

Teneo advises Bird as it flies into bankruptcy

Teneo Capital serves as financial and restructuring advisor to Miami-based Bird Inc. as the once-high flying e-scooter rental company declared Chapter 11 on Dec. 20.

Bird, which operates in 350 cities in the US, Canada, Europe, Middle East and Australia, had a market valuation of \$1 billion five years ago.

But it could not overcome cutthroat competition, regulatory requirements, winter weather, safety worries, and concerns about sidewalk litter of its undocked scooters. Paris, which was one of Bird's top markets, earlier this year banned rental e-scooters.

Bird interim CEO Michael Washinushi called the bankruptcy a "significant milestone in Bird's transformation."

The re-org will accelerate Bird's progress toward profitability by right-sizing its capital structure, he added.

Washinushi said Bird will remain focused on "our mission to make cities more livable by using micromobility to reduce car usage, traffic and carbon emissions."

Since its 2017 launch in Los Angeles, Bird riders have traveled over 300 million miles globally, offsetting an estimated 90 pounds of carbon emissions from avoided car trips.

Despite that strong global citizenship, Bird suffered a \$73.4 million nine-month loss on \$132.2 million revenues.

Strategic Communications at the Intersection of Valuation and Reputation



Corporate Communications
Proxy Contests
Media Relations
Public Affairs
Data Analytics

Thought Leadership
Transaction Support
Investor Relations
Special Situations & Crisis
Digital Strategy & Creative

NEW YORK
BOSTON
SAN FRANCISCO
SOUTH FLORIDA
WASHINGTON, DC



SloanePR.com
212.486.9500
Info@SloanePR.com

🐦 @SloaneAndCoPR

📷 @SloaneAndCoPR

🌐 [LinkedIn.com/company/Sloane-&-Company](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Sloane-&-Company)

SLOANE & COMPANY

Richard Levick: reflections on a life force

A tribute to the life and work of Richard Levick.

By Larry Smith

I've been fortunate enough in my career to have worked in some big towns and to have met some big people. No question, though, I never met a bigger one than Richard S. Levick, Esq., who died this spring at the age of 65. It's appropriate, perhaps, that his death occurred in the season of rebirth, for Richard was all about rebirth in his personal life as well as in his work. He was ever zealous for the next frontier, ever remaking himself and the communications firm he founded in the late 1990s.

We first knew each other as a journalist (me) and a PR guy (him). In late 1999, he asked me what I was doing for the rest of my life. At that early time in its history, the LEVICK firm—then Levick Strategic Communications—did mainly one thing, which was promoting lawyers and their thought leadership in the media. As you can imagine, that market matured to senescence in predictably short order.

We were hustling for law firm work when the call came in from a client who wanted to know if we did crisis. His client, a beleaguered order of the Catholic Church, needed help. Oh brother, did they! That was our breakout moment. We followed our best instincts, immersed ourselves in the client's strangely secretive culture and achieved tangible lasting results. Voila, "the father of modern crisis communications," as he's often depicted, suddenly emerged on the scene.

Richard quickly recognized that crisis work was both profitable and invigorating, much more so than counting media placements for law firms. As Richard's reputation grew, our work quickly moved beyond crisis management and morphed into long-term institutional client relationships that wouldn't simply end when the crisis did.

It was a period of immense excitement, of endless possibility—reputation management and public affairs and litigation communications merging together. Richard's eye for these disciplines amazed me. I hardly knew what litigation communications meant until we found ourselves helping Rosie O'Donnell prevail against her former publisher. We were in court every day; a lot of law firms can't make that claim.

More than simply business decisions, Levick's growth through these fundamental diversifications bespoke Richard's hunger

for adventure, for the new, for life in all its sundry crevices. In that sense, he was among the lucky ones whose life and work are inseparable. And the rest of us were lucky—I was certainly lucky—to ride along with him every step of the way. He loved the "Big Table" metaphor, he loved bringing back old colleagues to work on client matters, including colleagues he might have bickered with or even fired five or ten years earlier.

No wonder the LEVICK firm attracted so much talent over the years: Congressional staffers, politicians, trade association veterans, journalists, former regulators, Internet pros, financial communications people who spoke the language of Wall Street as though it were their native tongue. At the very least, working with Richard would be an adventure. At the very most, the sky might well be the limit.

He was a big-picture guy in every way. He bristled when widget manufacturers would question our lack of knowledge about widgets. He said they just didn't understand what the communications game was all about, and he was right.



Richard Levick

So, Richard set out to teach them. He'd speak to the UN General Assembly if he could, or to a local convention of florists or plumbing supply distributors if needed. Richard bedazzled them all and, no surprise, he became a TV fixture, one of the pundits to call whenever a corporate disaster made headlines. His was a marketing whirlwind the likes of which I had never seen before. And it went on for decades, his energies accelerating at a torrential pace.

When he'd give presentations on crisis communications, it was, like all his presentations, a joyous and ebullient occasion. That might seem counter-intuitive. After all, crisis involves mainly blood, sweat and tears. How can it be joyous and ebullient? But it was, because it was work and work is life. So, according to the Gospel of Richard Levick, sit back and enjoy the show!

It wasn't difficult for me to enjoy the show. The show was, after all, suffused with humor from Day One. For whatever reason, of the gazillion examples, a very small one persists in my memory. Richard had asked me to write a dunning letter to a recently departed client. I wrote one with the standard opener, "Dear Tom, This letter is in reference to outstanding Invoice XXX." Richard suggested I replace that opener with one of his own:

"Dear Tom, As Lyndon Johnson used to say, 'I come to you with a heavy heart ...'"

Humor? Richard Levick? Ya think? In the last few weeks of his life, he said to some of us, "Well, the good thing about dying is that I won't have to pay any more alimony."

Yeah, he could be outrageously funny about himself yet so seriously self-critical when the stakes were high—for the firm or for clients or for his friends. Never think that Richard Levick was a frivolous man. In any profile of Richard, on any list of his salient virtues, the word courage easily takes top spot. He never minded exposing himself to criticism and if, in the hurly-burly of professional competition, that criticism might turn into personal attacks, he took it in stride. He knew it was part of the game that he himself had signed on to play.



Larry Smith

Richard's moment of greatest courage came decades later as the multiple ruthless malignancies proliferated daily. The pain intensified, and the cancer was intractable. I've seen people die well and bravely before, but not like this. Suffice it to say that, up until the end, he was doing the business he loved. Two colleagues arrived each day at the hospice to coordinate the work.

Richard was on the phone from morning to night with friends, relatives and co-workers. I didn't want to burden him, so I'd send texts praising the Red Sox and damning the Yankees. If he replied, I'd know it was okay to call.

"It's so unfair," a former colleague who loved him wrote to me. He was only 65, so maybe it was indeed remarkably unfair. But no one who spoke to Richard in those last days would hear anything like that from him. He was too busy to waste his precious time on that kind of thinking, too busy arranging practical matters that affected people for whom he felt responsible and too busy reassuring the countless friends who loved him that he loved them in return.

How hard it is when a life force leaves this planet. Lord knows this planet needs as many life forces as it can get. It's harder still when that force has touched so many lives and done so much for each of them. Richard's innumerable friends can derive comfort in knowing that he's now taken his place among the legends of our profession, which is exactly where he belongs.

Larry Smith joined LEVICK in 2000. He was Senior Vice President until 2017. ○

Judgment. Experience. Results.

Corporations and institutions around the world are confronting a series of unforeseen events that are fundamentally shifting the ways people work and live – and have the potential to redefine businesses and entire industries.

This is a moment in time where clear, transparent communication is essential. The demand upon leaders to communicate in a timely and effective way with employees, customers, investors, and other key stakeholders has never been so critical.

For more than five decades, Kekst CNC has been a world leader in counselling clients on the most complex special situations, including: corporate and financial communications, mergers & acquisitions, restructurings, crisis and issues management, shareholder activism and governance, regulatory investigations/resolutions, change management and employee engagement, issues and reputation management, public affairs, as well as IPO communications. In most every instance, our proven experience, sound judgment and results we achieve are supported by data-driven insights, based on proprietary research and analysis capabilities.

That's why more than 600 clients around the world rely on Kekst CNC as their strategic communications partner. With 300 experienced professionals located in 15 locations in key global markets, we create and implement communications strategies to support every aspect of our clients' business objectives.

Kekst CNC

A Leading Global Strategic Communications Consultancy.

New York, London, Munich, Berlin, Frankfurt, Stockholm, Brussels, Tokyo, Seoul,
Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Dallas, Boston, Washington, D.C. and Paris

Mark Weiner dies at 68

Mark Weiner, research guru and a leader in PR measurement, died on Dec. 10. He was 68.

Weiner was generous with his time and served as a mentor to many in the PR industry. He was a frequent speaker at PRSA, IABC, Arthur Page and Conference Board events.

Early in his career, he wrote a monthly research column for *O'Dwyer's* magazine.

Weiner founded Medialink Research and then went on to helm Delahaye Medialink, and then exited for Ketchum's Global Research Director post.

Weiner also was CEO of PRIME Research, and chief insights officer of both Cision and Cognito Insights.

He is the author of "PR Technology, Data and Insights," and "Unleashing the Power of PR."

The Institute for Public Relations awarded Weiner its Jack Felton Medal for Lifetime Achievement in 2018 for his contributions to PR research and evaluation.

A public memorial service for Weiner is slated for January. ○



Mark Weiner

Bob Dorf dies at 74

Bob Dorf, who founded his own firm and then ran Dorf & Stanton with Alex Stanton, died Dec. 2. He was 74.

He began his communications career as a news writer on New York's all-news station 1010 WINS radio. That led to the launch of Bob Dorf Communications and the partnership with Stanton.

Dorf continued as a publisher and consultant in the field of customer relationship management. He helped grow boutique shop 1to1 Marketing, and co-authored "The Startup Owner's Manual."

With his late wife, Fran, Dorf founded an early intervention program for young children with developmental disabilities, now JumpStart at the Stamford JCC, in memory of their son Mikey.

He served on the board of directors of Temple Sinai in Stamford and in 2020 traveled with Temple members to help build a school in Senegal with the non-profit group buildOn, which was dedicated to Fran. ○



Bob Dorf

Weber Shandwick alum Bargar joins GCI Health

Lilit Bargar, who was most recently an EVP in the healthcare practice at Weber Shandwick, comes on board at GCI Health as EVP, corporate practice lead.

At Weber Shandwick, Bargar oversaw corporate thought leadership through executive communications for pharmaceutical clients. Before coming to Weber, she served as group SVP at Marina Maher Communications, focusing on healthcare corporate communications.

At GCI Health, Bargar will work with pharmaceutical leaders to build their corporate brand as well as implementing strategies for above-brand storytelling and thought leadership. ○



Lilit Bargar

Verizon recruits Twitter, Peloton alum

Verizon snags Peloton Interactive Chief Marketing Officer Leslie Berland as its new CMO, effective Jan. 9. Berland succeeds Diego Scotti, who left Verizon earlier this year.

At Peloton, Berland worked to move the brand past its identity as simply a stationary-bike maker, promoting its app, which offers a range of different workouts.

Before joining Peloton in January, Berland was CMO at Twitter from 2016 to 2022, also serving as chief people officer from 2017 to 2021. She previously served as EVP of Global Advertising, Marketing and Digital Partnerships at American Express.

At Verizon, Berland will lead all aspects of the company's global brand and marketing strategy, including marketing activation and creative, marketing effectiveness, consumer insights, media and strategic partnerships. ○



Leslie Berland

Walker Sands names Cross, Parro co-CEOs

Walker Sands names Andrew Cross and Dave Parro as co-CEOs, succeeding outgoing CEO

Mike Santoro, who will remain on the Walker Sands board of directors.

Cross has been with the agency since 2011, most recently serving as President. As co-CEO, he manages the agency's billable teams including creative, content, demand generation, strategy and insights, public relations and client services.

Parro joined Walker Sands in 2012 and was most recently Chief Operating Officer. He will continue to oversee the agency's corporate functions including finance, talent, operations, IT and sales and marketing.

"Andrew and Dave are world-class leaders supported by extraordinary leaders themselves, and I feel so fortunate knowing this team and our clients are in great hands," said Santoro. ○



Andrew Cross



Dave Parro

Brunswick Group recruits Cooke

Brunswick Group has hired Steve Cooke, Senior Partner at Slaughter and May, London-based multinational law firm, as a Partner. He will join the "critical issues" firm on May 1.

Cooke has been at S&M for more than 40 years and headed its mergers and acquisitions unit from 2001 to 2016.

He has handled clients such as ARM, Cadbury, Centrica, Diageo, Hikma Pharmaceuticals, British Airways/International Airlines Group, Reckitt Benckiser, Rolls-Royce, Shire and Walt Disney Company.

Cooke has worked with Brunswick since it launched in London in 1987. In his new post, he will counsel clients on M&A, crisis, disputes and litigation.

Cooke is the author of "Takeovers," "The Morning of Our Lives" and "Journey Without Maps."

He also has composed and performed music in more than 60 films and TV series, including "The Queen's Green Planet," "Land of Hope and Glory" and "Chosen." ○



Steve Cooke



Welcome to the arena.

Where everyone with a phone is a reporter.

And fortunes can be lost over a single tweet.

ICR provides integrated communications for leaders who are focused on building and protecting the value of their businesses.



5WPR

3 Park Ave., 19th Fl.
New York, NY 10016
212/999-5585
www.5wpr.com

Robert Ford, Managing Partner & EVP, Corporate Communications
Dara Busch & Matt Caiola, Co-CEOs

5W specializes in highly charged issues and crisis management for companies and individuals facing unanticipated difficulties in the marketplace—from rumors to recalls—responding within minutes on crisis PR issues. We understand why a crisis is called a “defining moment”—and for this reason, our speed is tempered by an analysis of every possible scenario prior to taking action. We are committed to discreetly developing and executing strategies that increase positive news coverage, mitigate negative coverage, change prevalent public narratives and/or rebuild reputations. Our team tackles the tough topics head on with a well-researched and strategic 360-degree approach. We are skilled in managing ORM/SEO programs. When negative stories appear, we can positively impact online reputation, changing and affecting your search results quickly and efficiently.

Founded 20 years ago, 5W has been named a top US and NYC PR Agency by leading industry publication *O'Dwyer's*, as well as awarded Agency of the Year in the 2023 American Business Awards®, and continuously brings leading businesses a resourceful, bold, and results-driven approach to communication. The agency has more than 300 professionals serving clients in B2C, B2B, Public Affairs, Crisis Communications, and Digital Marketing. In addition to its business accolades, 5W was named to *Inc.* magazine's Best Workplaces 2022 list.

AUGUST

333 7th Avenue, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10001
323/892-5562
Inquiries@augustco.com
www.augustco.com

Steven Goldberg, CEO
Ellen Davis, Senior Managing Director
Cari Robinson, Senior Managing Director

What, when, and how you communicate matters more than ever.

August believes nothing is more important than effective communication when it comes to influencing perception, driving value, and protecting reputation. We apply years of experience, specialized expertise, and a holistic approach to help our clients navigate critical issues, effectively engage with their stakeholders and mitigate reputational harm while supporting and protecting legal and business strategy. Our approach is built on the foundations of deeply analytical strategy development, compelling narrative building, and diligent execution.

August's professionals apply their experience as former attorneys, journalists, and industry professionals to advise clients on matters including litigation and investigations, crisis management, restructurings and Chapter 11 cases, financial transactions, and corporate positioning and reputation management. August is headquartered in Los Angeles, with additional offices in New York, Dallas, and San Francisco.

August and its professionals have been recognized by Chambers & Partners for litigation support and crisis communications.

AVAANS MEDIA

Remote Team:
1525 E. Armando Dr.
Long Beach, CA 90807
t@avaansmedia.com
424/625-4292

Tara Coomans, Founder and CEO

Now isn't the time for inexperienced or fresh-faced PR teams without real-world business experience. You need a team that picks up on nuance, fast, and from consumer blow-ups to regulatory meltdowns, guides you through the process with excellent strategic thinking.

We navigate you through the storm in a 24/7 media cycle, regardless of the situation. Our team of experts understands how to take control of a situation and ease the path.

The Avaans Media team is by your side with strategies that support your business and protect your most valuable asset: your reputation. Selected by our clients as an



Tara Coomans, Avaans Media
Founder and CEO.

Inc. Power Partner for our crisis communication.

BERLINROSEN

15 Maiden Lane, Suite 1600
New York, NY 10038
growth@berlinrosen.com
www.berlinrosen.com

Valerie Berlin, Principal & Co-Founder
Jonathan Rosen, Principal & Co-Founder
Andrew Friedman, Executive Vice President, Crisis & Legal Affairs

BerlinRosen is a full-service communications firm with more than 600 communications strategists across offices in the United States and Europe. The agency has received over 75 awards and recognitions, including *PRWeek's* 2023 Outstanding Large Agency and *Observer's* #1 Most Powerful PR Firm for the third consecutive year. We were also recently named a finalist for Best in Crisis and Outstanding Large Agency in the upcoming 2024 *PRWeek* Awards.

Founded on the idea that there was a market for a firm that could operate with the speed and intensity of a political campaign, our firm has a proven track record of delivering bold and creative solutions to crisis communications, reputation management, message development, media relations and audience engagement.

From large companies, institutions, law firms and legal organizations to foundations, nonprofits and individuals, our team has supported sensitive efforts to craft and drive aggressive strategies that

protect reputations, shape narratives and confront problems in real time. We know how to prepare for the challenges a crisis brings, how to navigate internal dynamics with key constituencies and how to shape media narratives to inoculate against negative press coverage.

We not only assess the media landscape, but also take the time to identify the reactions of partners, allies and internal teams, and to develop a plan to engage these parties and mitigate any potential negative situations or responses. And we jump into swift and powerful action when a true crisis arises.

BOARDROOM COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

1776 N Pine Island Road, Suite 320
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33322
954/370-8999
www.boardroompr.com
donsil@boardroompr.com

Orlando-Tampa-Naples-Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach-Aspen

Don Silver, Chief Operating Officer
Todd Templin, Executive VP
Eric Kalis, SVP
Jennifer Clarin, VP
Lauren Berger, VP
Jessica Shein, Account Director

Crisis Management: Preventing and Preparing for Potential Problems

BoardroomPR is one of Florida's top PR agencies offering statewide coverage. The firm's experienced staff of public relations and crisis management professionals routinely handle high-profile crisis projects and public affairs campaigns each year. Examples include: investigations, hostile takeovers, litigation, product recalls, criminal charges, safety compliance issues, accidental deaths, project approvals, bid objections and legislative campaigns.

Whether you're pre-developing a crisis communications plan or responding to an urgent threat, Boardroom's trusted and respected team will help you evaluate the situation, mitigate the risks and deal with your most important audiences, including media, social media, employees, stakeholders, customers, government and others.



Members of Bospar's award-winning team at a San Francisco Press Club event.

We immediately consult with your executives to assess the situation and develop an appropriate strategy and plan. Our team monitors traditional media, blogs and social networking sites and handles all inquiries. Call or email us if you are faced with a situation where a capable, seasoned crisis management team can help guide you to a satisfactory resolution.

BOSPAP

Located in every major U.S. city, including San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and Chicago.
Results@bospar.com
www.bospar.com

Curtis Sparrer, Co-Founder & Principal
Chris Boehlke, Co-Founder & Principal
Tom Carpenter, Principal
Joseph Krasinski, Chief Financial Officer
Denyse Dabrowski, Senior Vice President
Paula Bernier, Chief Content Officer

Bospar can move your business forward through the power of Politely Pushy® PR.

Are you an AI or data business raising funds? You can bank on Bospar to increase your visibility.

Are you rolling out a new cybersecurity solution? Bospar will alert media and secure coverage.

Are you working to scale your healthcare or HRtech business? Bospar will help you grow.

Are you keen to attract investors, partners, talent or analyst attention? Bospar is your magnet.

Are you trying to expand your business to the U.S. market? Bospar is ready to fly your flag.

Public relations and marketing are critical to your business success. However, if you are busy—launching a company, raising funds,

bringing a product or service to market, winning new business, providing great customer experiences, attracting and keeping top talent, and/or growing your business—PR and marketing may not be front and center. Bospar can help!

Bospar provides clients with bespoke packages that include any or all of these services:

- Public Relations & Media Training
- Investor & Analyst Relations
- Digital Content & Video
- Crisis & Reputation Management
- Integrated Marketing & Messaging
- Employee Engagement & Change Management

Whatever your external or internal communications needs or business sector, Bospar's award-winning team has the energy, expertise, PR prowess and Politely Pushy® approach to empower you to connect with and get best results from media, investors, employees, ecosystem partners and customers.

C STREET ADVISORY GROUP

641 Lexington Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10022
www.thecstreet.com

Jon Henes, Founder & Chief Executive Officer
Jackie Rubin, President, Strategic Communications
Luke Wolf, Managing Director

C Street is a strategic communications firm purposefully built to guide companies through their most complex financial and operational times. C Street's experience and expertise in the world of financial distress, liability management, strategic alternatives, and restructurings is unique, unsurpassed, and sophisticated.

C Street provides one-of-a-kind

guidance and expert strategic advice to help clients communicate with their key internal and external stakeholders and collaborate with their other expert professionals. We see around corners, prepare for what's to come, and help clients communicate powerfully, impactfully and clearly when they need to most.

C Street's team leverages its collective experience in law, business, media, and communications, as well as across industries and geographies, to help clients traverse the most important issues facing them today. C Street is led by Founder & CEO, Jon Henes, who has more than 25 years of experience advising clients on the most complex, complicated, and important restructurings and crises. Joined by a team of relentless, experienced, and best-in-class strategists and advisors, C Street is disrupting the communications marketplace and helping clients go from distress to success.

CLOUDBREAK COMMUNICATIONS

917/596-1445
alex@cloudbreakcommunications.com

Alex Dudley, Principal

Founded in 2020 by 25+ year Communications veteran Alex Dudley, Cloudbreak Communications has helped CEOs and rock stars, supermodels and politicians through the most trying, critical, interesting and exciting times of their lives and careers. We know what to say and what not to say. We know when to say it and to whom. We can help close a deal, right a wrong, defend one's honor or help an organization make an impression. We can help you manage Twitter outrage and Facebook misplays. We can help an organization hope for the best and prepare for the worst. How can we help you?

COLLECTED STRATEGIES

121 East 24th Street, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10010
212/379-2072
www.collectedstrategies.com

Scott Bisang, Partner
Jim Golden, Partner
Jude Gorman, Partner
Ed Hammond, Partner
Nick Lamplough, Partner
Dan Moore, Partner

Collected Strategies is an inde-

pendent advisory firm providing trusted, strategic communications counsel to Boards of Directors, C-Suite executives and IR/PR leaders. Founded on a principle that the best advice comes from the deepest relationships, we seek to work with clients as perpetual partners, offering senior-led counsel on the full range of corporate, operational and social issues that companies encounter.

Based in Manhattan's Flatiron neighborhood, we tailor solutions for our clients, providing pragmatic advice and actionable ideas to support them throughout the business lifecycle. In existence less than a year, we've already helped clients with private funding initiatives, IPO preparations, and transformative transactions, as well as the dynamics of shareholder activism and the complexities of financial restructuring.

CORNERSTONE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

800 Maine Avenue SW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20024
www.cgagroup.com
202/669-0575

Campbell Kaufman, Principal and Managing Director
ckaufman@cgagroup.com

Cornerstone Public Affairs is a bipartisan strategic communications and public affairs firm dedicated to helping our clients effectively move the needle with the audiences that matter most. We are a group of senior professionals with deep experience in public relations, business, media, government and politics. We help our clients anticipate and navigate the opportunities, complexities and challenges that occur at the intersection of business, policy, politics, and public perception to achieve their desired objectives.

We work alongside our clients to prepare for, manage and respond to a variety of challenges and uncertainties with confidence. Our team provides a bespoke, hands-on approach to understanding and managing risk, as well as helping organizations identify gaps in response plans, improving team coordination and enhancing decision-making processes under pressure—all while avoiding pitfalls and missteps in the current volatile political and media environments.

With Cornerstone's counsel, our clients are equipped with the confidence and strategic insight to han-

— Continued on page 66

CORNERSTONE

— Continued from page 65

dle real-world challenges effectively by not only anticipating potential threats, but by articulating and executing comprehensive response strategies with confidence, clarity and consistency—transforming vulnerabilities into opportunities.

CROSSWIND MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

501 Congress Avenue, Suite 150
Austin, TX 78701
512/537-1414
tgraham@crosswindpr.com
www.crosswindpr.com

Thomas Graham, President & CEO

Conversations that matter.

Crosswind Media and Public Relations fields the most experienced and effective crisis communications force in the Southwest, and our proven Crisis Preparation Response + methodology is an active engagement that paves the way for rapid, organized and smooth crisis response and reputation enhancement.

Members of Crosswind's CPR+ response team have experience as frontline civilian and military responders and communication leaders:

- 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 health-care 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.

At Crosswind, we create conversations that matter.

DENTONS GLOBAL ADVISORS

1900 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20006
202/759-5100
www.dentonsglobaladvisors.com

Edward Reilly, Chief Executive Officer
Deborah Scott, Partner & Head of EMEA
Adam Cabbage, Partner & Head of US
Melissa Kresse, Chief Content Officer

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.

To learn more, visit dentonsglobaladvisors.com.

DRAGON HORSE AGENCY

A Fiduciary to Brands
Downtown Naples Headquarters:
848 1st Ave. North, #200
Naples, FL 34102
305/306-3992; 239/325-5088
North Naples Office:
999 Vanderbilt Beach Rd., #200
Naples, FL 34108
305/306-3992; 239/325-5088
Los Angeles, CA Office:
100 Wilshire Blvd., #700
Santa Monica, CA 90401
310/917-1009
info@dragonhorseagency.com
www.dragonhorseagency.com
[Linkedin.com/company/dragonhorse-media-llc](https://www.linkedin.com/company/dragonhorse-media-llc)
[Facebook.com/dragonhorseagency](https://www.facebook.com/dragonhorseagency)
[Instagram.com/dragonhorseagency](https://www.instagram.com/dragonhorseagency)

Julie Koester, Founder/Co-CEO
P. Blake Renda, Founder/Co-CEO

Dragon Horse Agency was among the pioneering global advertising agencies to recognize the significant value and necessity of an integrated business and marketing strategy that delivers tailored solutions. The agency's business strategists and creative architects bring together the synergies of business and marketing analytics and strategy to provide a powerful solution called DragonONE. Dragon Horse Agency is led by a team of highly experienced partners with over 60 years of combined professional experience in business and advertising. This insightful approach to advertising and marketing has enabled Dragon Horse Agency to stand out as a leader in its field.

Dragon Horse Agency is a renowned firm that specializes in providing customized end-to-end solutions for Public Relations and Marketing. Our industry-leading digital and social media artificial intelligence platform called DragonIQ is bundled with our data analytics reporting product called

DragonVISION.

DragonIQ and DragonVISION offer an advanced A.I. bundle that serves as a precision optimization platform for businesses and brands. This platform enables companies to drive tactical engagement across all platforms, worldwide, 24/7, with multiple campaigns running in unison.

Dragon Horse Agency offers a comprehensive suite of services to support your business marketing efforts. Our team of highly skilled professionals includes writers, creators, designers, technicians, internet and social media experts, camera and film professionals, TV/radio/print producers, media buyers, brand managers, analysts, and business strategists, all of whom are dedicated to helping you achieve your goals.

By leveraging the expertise of our team, you can build a strong foundation for your business marketing and ensure that your brand is well-positioned to succeed in today's competitive landscape.

Dragon Horse Agency is committed to the vigorous pursuit of exceptional business marketing built on integrity, excellence, experience, and execution.

Accolades:
Best Marketing Campaign, Video-Telly Awards.
Best Ad Agency—*Gulfshore Business Magazine*.
Best Ad Agency—Expertise.
Best Website, Best Print Catalog—Aurora Awards.
Best Website—Sand Dollar Awards.

Best Direction, Best Video, Best Commercial—The Telly Awards.
Best Marketing Campaign—NYX Awards.
Best Marketing Campaign—MUSE Awards.
Top Digital Agency in the USA—UpCity.
Best Advertising/Motion Graphics/Graphics/Visual Effects—LIT Awards.

Finalist for Best Video/Best Video Graphics—CannesLIONS.

Finalist for Top International Marketing Firm—International Trade Council, Go Global Awards.

EDELMAN

250 Hudson St., 16th Floor
New York, NY 10013
212/768-0550
Fax: 212/704-0117
www.edelman.com

Edelman is a global communications firm that partners with businesses and organizations to evolve,

— Continued on page 68

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

LOS ANGELES • NEW YORK • WASHINGTON DC
800-288-8809 (24-HOURS/DAY, 7-DAYS/WEEK)

EDELMAN

— Continued from page 66

promote and protect their brands and reputations. Our 6,000 people in more than 60 offices deliver communications strategies that give our clients the confidence to lead and act with certainty, earning the trust of their stakeholders. Our honors include the Cannes Lions Grand Prix for PR; *Advertising Age's* 2019 A-List; the *Holmes Report's* 2018 Global Digital Agency of the Year; and, five times, Glassdoor's Best Places to Work. Since our founding in 1952, we have remained an independent, family-run business. Edelman owns specialty companies Edelman Intelligence (research) and United Entertainment Group (entertainment, sports, lifestyle).

FGS GLOBAL

909 Third Ave.
New York, NY 10022
212/687-8080
www.fgsglobal.com

George Sard, Roland Rudd and **Carter Eskew**, Co-Chairmen
Paul Holmes, Vice Chair
Mike Feldman and **Paul Verbinen**, Co-Chairs of North America
Alexander Geiser, Global CEO
Andrew Cole, Deputy Global CEO
Winnie Lerner, CEO of North America
Faeth Birch, CEO of UK, Middle East and Asia
Brigitte von Haacke, CEO of Europe

FGS Global is a leading global strategic communications consultancy, with 1,300 experts around the world, advising clients in navigating complex situations and reputational challenges. FGS Global was formed from the combination of Finsbury, The Glover Park Group, Hering Schuppener and Sard Verbinen & Co to offer board-level and c-suite counsel in all aspects of strategic communications—including corporate reputation, crisis management, government affairs and is also the leading force in financial communications worldwide. FGS Global provides seamless and integrated support, including from professionals in design and creative, digital strategy, and research and insights, across 30 cities worldwide, serving global clients from offices in Abu Dhabi, Amsterdam, Beijing, Berlin, Boston, Brussels, Calgary, Chicago, Dubai, Dublin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Houston, Kingston, London, Los Angeles,

Munich, New York, Paris, Riyadh, San Francisco, Shanghai, Singapore, South Florida, Tokyo, Toronto, Vancouver, Washington, DC, Zurich

FINN PARTNERS

1675 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
212/715-1600
www.finnpartners.com

Jessica Berk Ross, Managing Partner, Public Affairs Global Practice Leader, Crisis Management Lead Coordinator, Washington, D.C. Jessica.Ross@finnpartners.com, 202/466-7800

Ryan Barr, Managing Partner, Global Financial
Gil Bashe, Chair, Global Health & Purpose
Fern Lazar, Managing Partner, Global Health
Chantal Bowman-Boyles, JD, Managing Partner, Europe
Nicole Cottrill, Senior Partner, Nashville, Health
Robin Crawford, Managing Partner, Wash., D.C., Public Affairs
Marina Stenos, Managing Partner, Education
Kyle Farnham, Managing Partner, Global Consumer
Michael Heinley, Senior Partner, Health Litigation
Tom Jones, Managing Partner, NY Health & Pharma
John Seigenthaler, Managing Partner, Nashville, National Media
Sabrina Guttman, Managing Partner, Global Technology
Bess Winston, Senior Partner, Sustainability
Naema Ismail, Managing Partner, Singapore

FINN Partners has been ranked among the world's leading public relations agencies by the *Holmes Report*, and *PRNews* has acknowledged FINN senior staff as "Crisis Communicators of the Year." Our depth of knowledge offers clients access to the counsel and strategies that reach influencers, media and policymakers effectively, and help to build resilience and positive reputation.

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.

FRENCH/WEST/VAUGHAN

112 East Hargett St.
Raleigh, NC 27601
919/832-6300
www.fwv-us.com

Rick French, Chairman & CEO
David Gwyn, President / Principal
Natalie Best, Chief Operating Officer / Principal

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. Headquartered in Raleigh, N.C., and founded in April 1997, FWV has received 30 National Agency of the Year honors over the past 26 years. Its professional services practice area is ranked 16th in the country.

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, unpredictable 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 technology, healthcare and 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.

- Counseled and managed media for a global semiconductor company on a series of government-sourced media links on economic development plans and investments that could impact share price.

- Ongoing work with the organizing bodies of Western sports properties handling rodeo-related animal rights vs. animal welfare issues.

- Consulted and counseled multiple professional sports leagues, including Major League Soccer (MLS), the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) and National Football League (NFL), as well as associated franchises.

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.

FWV is the parent company of fashion and lifestyle PR firm AMP3 (New York City); mobility and transportation-focused agency The Millerschin Group (Greater Detroit); pet and animal health practice FWV Fetching and feature film development imprint Prix Productions. 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.

FTI CONSULTING STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

1166 Avenue of the Americas
15th Floor
New York, NY 10036
www.fticonsulting.com

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 combin-

— Continued on page 70

Producing results
when it matters most.

Take Control.

#1

U.S. M&A

— CORPORATE CONTROL ALERT H1 2023

#1

Corporate Shareholder
Defense Advisor

—BLOOMBERG H1 2023

**JOELE
FRANK**

Transaction Communications
Shareholder Activism
Restructuring & Bankruptcy
Crisis Communications & Special Situations
Litigation Support
Private Equity

IPOs & Spin-offs
Corporate Governance/ESG
Investor Relations
Corporate Communications &
Media Relations
Design & Digital

joelefrank.com

FTI CONSULTING

— Continued from page 68

ing decades of deep subject matter expertise with functional and disciplinary experience.

Our 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, ESG and activism, moments of crisis, cybersecurity, and complex public affairs and advocacy campaigns. Our integrated capabilities in financial communications, corporate reputation and public affairs help clients protect and drive business value.

G&S BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

111 West 33rd Street, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10120
212/697-2600
SHalsey@gscommunications.com
www.gscommunications.com

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 six key industries we serve: Advanced Manufacturing & Energy; Agribusiness; Financial & Professional Services; Healthcare; Home & Building; and Landscaping & Outdoor Living.

Our strategists, storytellers, analysts 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.

The March issue of *O'Dwyer's* will focus on PR firms specializing in food and beverage. If you would like to be profiled, contact Editor Steve Barnes at 646/843-2089 or steve@odwyerpr.com

GLADSTONE PLACE PARTNERS

485 Madison Avenue, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10022
212/230-5930
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 understand the complexity and super-charged nature of today's environment, which is why we have social and digital capabilities embedded in our DNA.

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 com-

munications strategist to C-suites, boards of directors, and chief communications officers.

H/ADVISORS ABERNATHY

230 Park Avenue, 23rd Floor
New York, NY 10169
212/371-5999
www.abernathy.h-advisors.global

Tom Johnson, CEO (tom.johnson@h-advisors.global)
Carina Davidson, President (carina.davidson@h-advisors.global)

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 worked closely with clients across sectors to help build, protect, and enhance their reputations, boost value, and seize new opportunities. Coming from diverse careers including public relations, journalism, corporate finance and investment banking, H/Advisors Abernathy's senior professionals serve as expert advisors to corporate decision makers and provide our clients with diligent hands-on service. Our multi-disciplinary team offers relevant expertise in financial communications, capital raising initiatives, activist preparation and defense, M&A advisory, profile raising, litigation, government investigations, IPOs, crisis matters, public affairs, stakeholder management, digital communications, thought leadership and other special situations initiatives.

Learn more at abernathy.h-advisors.global

Follow us on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/h-advisors-abernathy

ICR

685 Third Ave., 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10017
646/277-1200
tom.ryan@icrinc.com
www.icrinc.com

Thomas Ryan, CEO
Don Duffy, President

Established in 1998, ICR partners with public and private companies to execute strategic communications and advisory programs, and manage complex transactions and corporate events to enhance long-term enterprise value and corporate reputation. The firm's highly-dif-

ferentiated service model, which pairs capital markets veterans with senior communications professionals, brings deep sector knowledge and relationships to hundreds of clients across more than 20 industry groups. With more than 400 team members, ICR is one of the largest and most experienced independent communications and advisory firms, maintaining offices in New York, Connecticut, Boston, Baltimore, San Jose, London, and Beijing. Learn more at icrinc.com. Follow us on LinkedIn and on X at @ICRPR.

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.

INFINITE GLOBAL

21 West 38th St., 16th Floor
New York, NY 10018
917/602-0545
www.infiniteglobal.com
[Linkedin.com/company/infinite-global](https://www.linkedin.com/company/infinite-global)
[Twitter.com/igc_us](https://twitter.com/igc_us)

Additional offices: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C. 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

22 Vanderbilt Avenue, 18th Floor
New York, NY 10017
212/355-4449
info@joelefrank.com

One California Street
Suite 2275
San Francisco, CA 94111
415/869-3950

Joelle Frank, Managing Partner
Matthew Sherman, President

Joelle Frank provides strategic counsel and tactical support for high-stakes, high-profile special situations as well as for ongoing public and investor relations.

The Joelle Frank team is broad and deep and recognized by peers, the financial community and journalists for their quality work, strategic acumen and creative approach to challenging issues. The firm's clients range from large, global public companies to smaller, private enterprises across virtually all industries.

Joelle Frank consistently ranks among the top PR firms across all its practice areas and brings extensive experience helping companies, boards and management teams preserve credibility and protect their reputation in navigating crisis situations. The firm's scope of crisis work includes issues related to cybersecurity, workplace misconduct and ethical violations, litigation, regulatory investigations and actions, product liability and recalls, workplace violence, financial restatements and accounting fraud, unplanned management changes, ESG controversies, short attacks, and facility disasters, among others.

KARV

370 Lexington Ave., Suite 2001
New York, NY 10017
212/333-0275
www.KARV.global

Andrew Frank, Founder and President
Eric C. Andrus, Executive VP

KARV is a globally recognized strategic communications and advisory 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 apart as we deliver custom-tailored communications and strategic counsel that helps clients move forward in unpredictable times.

KEKST CNC

U.S. Headquarters
1675 Broadway, 30th Floor
New York, NY 10019
212/521-4800
www.kekstcnc.com

Jeremy Fielding, Co-Chief, Executive Officer
Bernhard Meising, Co-Chief, Executive Officer

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 50 years, our team of more than 300 experienced professionals in 15 locations 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 nav-

igate 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, public affairs, 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.

LAG STRATEGY CORP

Pasadena, California
626/696-3239
stuart@lagstrategy.com,
matthew@lagstrategy.com
www.lagstrategy.com/

Stuart Pfeifer, Co-Founder
Matthew Fern, Co-Founder

Co-Founders Stuart Pfeifer and Matthew Fern are veteran crisis communications professionals who created the firm after long careers at one of the nation's best-known crisis PR agencies. They have represented corporations, publicly traded companies, celebrities and entrepreneurs in make-or-break crisis situations, offering thoughtful and strategic solutions that have built LAG Strategy's reputation as an elite crisis PR firm. Pfeifer is a Pulitzer Prize-winning former veteran journalist who understands how the news media works and how to protect his clients' reputations in times of crisis. Fern is an expert in digital marketing and advertising whose skills pair perfectly to protect clients' online reputations—an essential tool in today's digital world.

LEIDAR

1500 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20005
14 Penn Plaza
225 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10122
Contact@Leidar.com
www.Leidar.com
Follow Leidar on Linkedln

Rolf Olsen, CEO

Philip Armstrong, **John Lavallo**,
Maxwell Marcucci, Managing Directors

Leidar is a global communications consultancy that has recently expanded to the U.S. market. Leidar has combined with the former LEVICK Strategic Communications, adding offices in Washington D.C. and New York to the firm's global footprint that includes offices in Geneva, Brussels, Oslo, Dubai, and Singapore. For more than a decade, Leidar has helped corporate and NGO clients across Europe, Asia and the Middle East strategically leverage opportunities and withstand reputational challenges.

Leidar practice areas include Risk, Reputation and Crisis; Corporate Advisory; Public Affairs and Policy; ESG and Sustainability.

Our clients work in the following sectors: Healthcare, Enterprise Technology, Non-Profit, Food and Nutrition, Transportation, Medical Technology, IT, Legal, Financial Services, Consumer Package Goods, Travel and Tourism, Real Estate, Manufacturing, and Government Contracting.

THE LEVINSON GROUP (TLG)

200 Park Avenue South, Suite 1218
New York, NY 10003
www.TLGCommunications.com

655 15th Street, NW, Suite 501
Washington, D.C. 20005
202/244-1785

13 Norfolk Place
London W2 1QJ
c/o The Frontline Club

The Levinson Group (TLG) is a full-service strategic communications firm advising global leaders, public and private businesses, law firms, and civic institutions on consequential and complex issues. Headquartered in New York and Washington, D.C., TLG's team of expert communications advisors bring extensive experience in business, law, policy, politics, finance, and the media.

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

— Continued on page 72

THE LEVINSON GROUP

— Continued from page 71

and risk management; litigation communications; cybersecurity communications; and global financial communications including corporate restructuring, executive transitions, mergers, acquisitions, and other transitions. The firm also has a strong commitment to leading social impact programs and has a robust and diverse pro bono practice.

TLG's team of veteran communicators have extensive experience successfully partnering with leading businesses, institutions, and individuals to manage risk, assess crisis readiness, and navigate pivotal inflection points. The firm's senior team members have been recognized as communications and public relations industry leaders, receiving notable industry awards for their success and expertise including "Crisis Manager of the Year" multiple times by *PR News*, "Women to Watch" by *PR Week*, "Top PR People in Crisis Communications" by *Insider*, "Media Relations Professional of the Year" by *PR Daily*, and "Top 100 Legal Strategists" by *Lawdragon*.

TLG was recently named a *PR Week* 2024 Agency of the Year finalist, and has also been recognized by *PRNews* as Agency of the Year and Ragan's as Crisis Firm of the Year. The firm also receives the highest ranking by *Chambers & Partners* and *National Law Journal*, noting TLG's proven track record in Crisis Management and Litigation Communications.

MARX LAYNE & COMPANY

31300 Orchard Lake Rd., #100
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
248/855-6777
mlayne@marxlayne.com
marxlayne.com

Michael Layne, President
Michael Szudarek, Partner
Michael Odom, Senior Vice President
Lana Mini, Vice President

Detroit-based Marx Layne & Co. is a full-service public relations and digital media firm offering media relations, public affairs, crisis and reputation management, social media and special events management services. Established in 1987, Marx Layne provides outstanding, results-oriented communications counsel to a broad spectrum of clients in the business, government and non-profit sectors.

MONTIETH & COMPANY

155 E. 44th St., Suite 1610
New York, NY 10017
646/437-7602
www.montiethco.com

Montieth M. Illingworth, CEO & Global Managing Partner
Perry Goldman, Senior Director, Professional Services, Crisis Management and Litigation PR
Katarina Matic, Senior Director, Marketing Communications, Issues Management and Public Affairs, Litigation Communications, Branding and Website Development
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. 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.

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 are frequently hired by law firms to help advise their clients on media relations pertaining but not limited to intellectual property and patent litigation, competition, bankruptcy, mergers and acquisition, corporate governance, international trade, contract law, SPACs, etc. We have advised on many of the most high-profile, headline issues, crises, and court actions in the world, civil, regulatory and law-enforcement related.

Montieth & Company enables its clients to achieve influence, realize their ambitions, and solve their most critical problems. Central to our value-add is achieving outcomes in our issues, crisis and litigation counsel that protects the corporate reputation and, where relevant, supports key corporate initiatives.

ORANGEFIERY

135 W. 50th Street, Suite 200
New York, NY 10020
415/384-8677

mike@orangeifiery.com
www.orangeifiery.com

Mike Kuczkowski, Founder & CEO
Diana Dopfel, Senior Vice President

In today's complex business environment, reputational risks have multiplied. Brand performance in the face of crises can make or break a company. Orangeifiery provides support for both crisis preparedness and crisis response. We use a rigorous, analytical approach to map and prioritize potential issues; develop norms and governance around crisis detection, evaluation and escalation; and lead crisis response messaging and materials development. We prepare clients for crisis response through trainings, simulations and learning forums designed to enhance performance.

Founded in 2014, Orangeifiery has helped businesses of all sizes address complex public issues, improve their reputations and achieve commercial success. High-profile crises our team has managed include SwissRe and 23 other insurers in their litigation over the World Trade Center terrorist attacks and managing rapid response efforts for a pharmaceutical product for smoking cessation. We take great pride in our capabilities that have helped our clients develop norms for confronting complex issues and remaining resilient in high-risk crises.

PADILLA

1101 West River Parkway
Suite 400 (Headquarters)
Minneapolis, MN 55415
612/455-1700
PadillaCo.com

Chris Werle, Senior Vice President
24-hour emergency hotline (1-877/PR-ER-911)

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 crisis preparation and planning to crisis and critical issues management. 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 exposure and preparedness with a deep Risk Analysis and Preparedness Assessment. Based on that analysis, we develop plans and programming to address and mitigate the primary

threats facing the business as well as tailored simulations designed to stress test an organization's crisis protocols, decision-making and communications effectiveness.

Padilla is a full-service agency that transforms brands and organizations through strategically creative communications. Our work across deep areas of sector expertise in agriculture and environmental sciences, food, beverage and nutrition, health, technology and financial services, is consistently recognized by industry partners such as the *PRWeek* Awards, *PRovoke* IN2 SABRE Awards and PRSA Anvil Awards, among others. Padilla operates in seven cities across the U.S. through its family of brands, which includes, SHIFT (performance communications), FoodMinds (food and nutrition affairs) and Joe Smith (brand strategy). 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.

PEPPERCOMM

425 E. 53rd Street
New York, NY 10022
212/931-6100
connect@peppercomm.com
www.peppercomm.com

Steve Cody, CEO and Founder
Ann Barlow, EVP & Chief Engagement Officer
Jacqueline Kolek, EVP & Chief Innovation Officer
Maggie O'Neill, EVP & Chief Client Officer
Tara Lilien, Chief Talent Officer

Peppercomm, part of the Ruder Finn Group, is an award-winning strategic, integrated communications and marketing agency headquartered in New York City.

With 29 years of expertise, the agency has guided countless clients through a wide variety of issues and crises and manages corporate reputation on an ongoing basis. Today, stakeholders look to organizations to see if and how they respond to social and political events, such as war, the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, cases of racial and ethnic injustice, mass shootings and more. However, brands are often ill-equipped to offer a response.

With only 23% of communications executives reporting they have frameworks or playbooks to respond to social issues, RepComp™, the agency's issues and crisis communications solution, guides organizations through the

development of an issues response framework. Aligned to their unique values and stakeholders, RepCompass successfully prepares for those critical moments when they have an opportunity to speak out (or not).

The company recently introduced Team Meridian, a new specialty group with nearly a century of experience to provide strategic counsel to help clients plan for and manage societal crises impacting their people, brands and business. A unique approach combining both internal and external crisis preparedness, Team Meridian launched in anticipation of greater public discourse during a highly contentious U.S. presidential election cycle.

This team has deep expertise guiding business-to-consumer and business-to-business clients through the process of developing a repeatable and objective protocol specifically to deal with social issues, as well as crisis and reputation management. The teams' expertise spans industries including agriculture, automotive and mobility, manufacturing, retail, food & beverage, hospitality, technology, banking, financial services and professional services.

Visit www.peppercomm.com or find us at @Peppercomm.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS INC.

Partner in The Worldcom Public Relations Group

161 N. Clark St., Suite 2050
Chicago, IL 60601
312/558-1770
lets_talk@pcipr.com
www.pcipr.com

Jill Allread, APR, CEO
Craig Pugh, APR, President
Pamela Oettel, COO/CFO

Bringing calm and strategy to clients in crisis, Public Communications Inc. works closely with our clients to prepare them to effectively handle situations that can threaten an organization's brand and erode consumer confidence. We partner with clients from prevention through the challenges of managing issues to then thriving in post-crisis recovery.

PCI's experienced counselors consistently deliver award-winning campaigns for clients with reputation management and enhancement needs in all fields, including health-care companies and associations; conservation, zoo and aquarium organizations; government agencies and nonprofits of all sizes. When an

organization faces trouble, a thorough and strategic crisis communications plan is vital. We work with clients to identify, plan for, and mitigate crises that have the potential to negatively shape public opinion and disrupt business.

The PCI team has extensive experience helping clients manage their reputational risk through crisis communications planning and implementation. We also have specialists to provide spokesperson training and coaching on how to best articulate company values and messages that can restore public faith and support.

PCI offers clients a specialized, post-crisis communication recovery model based on rapid response; ongoing and proactive communication; and inspired thought leadership that is critical to companies of all sizes. In recent years, PCI developed deep experience and skills in assisting clients to communicate effectively through company culture change, natural and man-made disasters, and through personnel and labor issues.

PUBLIC POLICY HOLDING COMPANY (PPHC)

800 North Capitol Street NW
Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20002
202/688-0020
www.pphcompany.com
inquiries@pphcompany.com
inquires@concordantadvisory.com

Simon Lee, Chairman of the Board of Directors
G. Stewart Hall, Chief Executive Officer
Roel Smits, Chief Financial Officer
Thomas Gensemer, Chief Strategy Officer
Sarah Wills, CEO, Concordant Advisory

Public Policy Holding Company (PPHC) is the largest group of government relations and policy communications firms by revenue and reach. Incorporated in 2014 and publicly listed in 2021 (London Stock Exchange: PPHC), PPHC provides clients with a fully integrated and comprehensive range of services, including government and public relations, crisis communications, research and analytics, and digital advocacy campaigns.

Retained by over 1200 clients, including corporates, trade associations and non-governmental organizations, PPHC is active in all major sectors of the U.S. economy, including healthcare and pharmaceuticals, financial services, energy,

technology, telecommunication and transportation.

Group services support clients to enhance and defend their reputations, advance policy goals, manage regulatory risk, and engage with US federal and state-level policy makers, stakeholders, media and the public.

PPHC operates a holding company structure and currently has eight operating entities comprising Crossroads Strategies, Forbes Tate Partners, Seven Letter, O'Neill & Associates, Alpine Group Partners, KP Public Affairs, MultiState Associates and Concordant Advisory.

Each of PPHC's federal lobbying firms consistently rank in the top 20 of over 2,500 registered firms for revenue, based on quarterly federal lobbying disclosures. Combined, PPHC is the largest in these rankings.

In November 2023, PPHC launched **Concordant Advisory**, a policy and communications advisory firm for organizations at the crossroads of market risk and transformational growth. Concordant is designed to service clients in special circumstances and/or crisis by working across the breadth of PPHC firms, and over 350 policy and communications experts.

REEVEMARK

521 Fifth Ave., 27th Fl.
New York, NY 10175
212/433-4600
info@reevemark.com
www.reevemark.com
Follow ReeveMark on LinkedIn and Twitter.

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 direct 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 po-

sitioning programs, and reputation 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.

REPUTATION DOCTOR®, LLC

244 Fifth Ave., Suite 2620
New York, NY 10001
212/595-8500
www.reputationdoctor.com

Mike Paul, President & CEO

Reputation Doctor® LLC is a global leader in crisis communications and risk management advisory services. Much of our work these days in crisis communications and risk management is focused on high-stakes corporate CEO and board advisory.

In addition to advising leading corporations and conglomerates, Reputation Doctor® LLC has an excellent track record of providing crisis communications and risk management advisory services to governments, NGOs, as well as sports and entertainment clients worldwide.

Reputation Doctor® LLC provides Crisis Communications and Risk Management Advisory Services to leading clients when the media, customers, consumers, employees, investors, regulators, government leaders and even fans are all demanding answers in high-stake situations.

Our global team of senior consultants provide winning results by developing strategic crisis communications and risk management programs which add value consistently. We are very proud that our advice and counsel often surpasses our clients' expectations. We offer crisis management services to local, national and international clients. More than 50% of our client base is international.

Reputation Doctor® LLC is also a leader in litigation communications worldwide. We often offer our litigation communications services in conjunction with our crisis communications and risk management

— Continued on page 74

THE REPUTATION DOCTOR

— Continued from page 73

services when our clients face high-stakes issues in the court of law.

Why pick Reputation Doctor® LLC? Because Your Reputation Is Everything!™

RISA HELLER COMMUNICATIONS

233 Broadway, Suite 2160
New York, NY 10279
646/695-9515
info@risaheller.com
www.risaheller.com

Risa Heller, CEO
Jennifer Burner Barden, COO
James Yolles, Linden Zakula and Gwen Rocco, Managing Directors
Carly Holden, SVP

Risa Heller Communications (RHC) is a boutique issues management and crisis communications firm based in New York with clients across the globe. RHC proudly works on the front lines of high-profile issues management situations every day. Steeped in crisis communications, we have extensive experience designing and executing strategies that help our clients successfully navigate complicated issues and protect their reputations.

We work with a wide range of clients—from high-profile institutions facing a daily onslaught of media attention that need to break through the noise, to technology companies seeking to push back against entrenched interests, to private citizens confronting problems that require narrowly targeted communications and an under-the-radar approach. Our clients value our proactive strategies, thoughtful ideas and straightforward advice on finding the right way to tell their story, advance their business objectives, and protect their brand.

We are adept at seeing around corners, identifying potential problems before they arise, and devising smart, proactive strategies to keep our clients on their front foot. Our work is effective not only because we have excellent relationships with top reporters and understand how news is covered, but because our approach is informed by the ways that personalities and the press influence policymakers, investors, markets and decision making.

Our areas of expertise include: shaping high-profile, front-page news; employment litigation related to sex, race or age discrimina-

tion; employment litigation related to wrongful termination and retaliation; shareholder litigation; intellectual property; trusts and estates disputes; executive transitions; internal investigations and problems with workplace culture; labor relations; white collar defense; government and regulatory investigations; Congressional hearing preparation/testimony; and public affairs and issue advocacy.

ROKK SOLUTIONS

2020 K Street, NW, Suite 510
Washington, D.C. 20006
202/280-2007
lindsay@rokkolutions.com
www.rokkolutions.com

Lindsay Singleton, Chief Development Officer

In an increasingly polarized political environment, ROKK Solutions stands apart by working together. We sit at the nexus of policy and communications, having spent years counseling companies, trade associations, coalitions and nonprofits. Our team possesses decades of senior-level public service and corporate communications experience, which allows us to offer our clients a true understanding of the policymaking process and the media strategies needed to create a climate for success. Unlike many other firms, we bring a bipartisan approach to each engagement because our experience shows it is the most effective way to ensure a clients' objectives are achieved.

We also know that communication silos between corporate America and Washington policymakers no longer exist. That's why ROKK Solutions harnesses its combined knowledge and experience of public affairs and corporate communications into crafting winning strategic communication strategies. In today's world, messages should be well thought out in order to positively resonate with consumers as much as Washington and state-based policymakers. We know that these groups access their information from different sources, which is why we deploy a data-driven approach to placing and amplifying communications in outlets and channels where they will have the greatest impact.

SACHS MEDIA

114 S. Duval St.
Tallahassee, FL 32301
850/222-1996
Fax: 850/224-2882
www.sachsmedia.com

For over 25 years, Sachs Media has helped clients across diverse sectors navigate the treacherous waters of high-profile crises with smart, strong, strategic support through its seasoned crisis management team. The key to weathering any crisis is preparation. That's where Sachs Media's trademarked Crisis Defense™ comes in—to actively help you plan, train, develop and deploy an effective plan to help prepare your organization in advance of a crisis and support you all through it.

SITRICK AND COMPANY

800/288-8809
www.sitrick.com
Los Angeles: 310/788-2850
New York: 212/573-6100
San Francisco: 415/999-9634
Denver: 720/904-8560
Washington, D.C.: 443/977-7215
Boston: 617/897-0326

Michael S. Sitrick, Chairman and 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 firm's 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 ma-

nipulation, 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.

Offices are in Los Angeles, New York and Washington, D.C., though we have handled cases all over the world.

For additional information including clients for whom our work was public and additional media comments about our firm see: www.sitrick.com.

SKDK

1150 18th Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036

285 Fulton Street, 63rd Floor
New York, NY 10007
info@skdknick.com

Doug Thornell, CEO
Jacqui Newman, COO

Media today moves faster than ever, and SKDK is built for speed. Whether producing advertising—often in 24 hours—to respond to attacks or jumping on the latest news story to gain a competitive advantage, SKDK knows that being nimble and adapting to an ever-changing environment means success.

SKDK has grown to become one of the nation's leading strategic communications and political consulting firms. With in-house digital, research, and creative teams working hand-in-hand with our public affairs experts, SKDK offers a range of expertise anchored in strategic and creative services. Our "always on" approach means whenever our clients need us, we are there. Named by the *Observer* in 2023 as one of the top PR firms in America, our team knows the players, the strategies, the issues, and we put all that to work for our clients.

SKDK and its subsidiaries are

proud members of Stagwell, a digital-first global marketing network that delivers scalable, seamless solutions through a unique combination of culture-moving creativity and cutting-edge technology.

To learn more, visit www.skdk-nick.com.

SLOANE & COMPANY

One World Trade Center
285 Fulton Street, 63rd Floor
New York, NY 10007
212/486-9500
Fax: 212/486-9094
info@sloanepr.com

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

Sloane & Company is an industry-leading strategic communications firm that provides comprehensive counsel on high-stakes situations, including: M&A; shareholder activism defense; IPOs and SPACs; 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 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

909 Third Ave.
New York, NY 10022
212/366-5300
astanton@stantonpr.com
www.stantonpr.com

Alex Stanton, CEO
Tom Faust, Charlyn Lusk, Managing Directors
Liam Collopy, Matthew Conroy, Michael Goodwin, Scott Lessne, Katrin Lieberwirth, Joshua Greenwald, 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, Conning, CVC, HGGC, Makena Capital, Rackspace Technologies, Schulte, Roth & Zabel, SonicWall, and Winston & Strawn.

SUBJECT MATTER+ KIVVIT

Washington HQ:
1201 New York Ave., NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20005
www.teamsubjectmatter.com
www.kivvit.com

Nicole Cornish, Chief Executive Officer
Paul Frick, Eric Sedler, Dan Sallick, Steve Elmendorf, and Jimmy Ryan, Managing Partners

Subject Matter+Kivvit is an advocacy firm with offices in Washington, Chicago, New York, New Jersey, and Miami. Our 200+ professionals provide a full suite of services—government relations, strategic communications, digital strategy, creative content, and advertising services—to build unique data-informed solutions that stand out in a crowded marketplace of ideas. Subject Matter+Kivvit is a portfolio of Coral Tree Partners, a Los Angeles-based private equity firm focused on investments in the media, entertainment, and communications sectors.

TRIDENT DMG

1120 20th St., NW, Ste. 700 N
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/899-3834
TridentDMG.com
Twitter: @TridentDMG
LinkedIn: Trident DMG

Josh Galper, Co-Founder and Partner
Adam Goldberg, Co-Founder and Partner
Eleanor McManus, Co-Founder and Partner

Trident DMG is a strategic and risk advisory firm that specializes in strategic and policy communications, stakeholder solutions, reputation management, public affairs, and crisis preparation and response. Based in Washington, D.C., we have worked in the Beltway and across the nation, the world, and numerous industries.

Founded in 2016, Trident is a one-of-a-kind agency that pioneered the approach of combining media, political, and legal expertise in one team, managing some of the

highest-profile crises of the past 30 years, from the White House to Wall Street to Silicon Valley and around the world. Our team members have worked in the White House, Congress, the national news media, global law firms, and corporations.

Our clients include investors, startups to global brands, high-profile and high-net-worth individuals, and nonprofits and NGOs. They turn to us for our ability to see around corners as strategists, to build creative and compelling narratives, to navigate and manage pressures from stakeholders and the media, and to seize opportunities. In addition, we regularly work with AmLaw 50 firms to advise their clients and support their advice.

Trident is consistently ranked a top firm by Chambers and Partners for litigation and investigations communications, including in Band 1 in recent years, and for crisis management. Trident's partners have been recognized as elite practitioners by Chambers, Lawdragon, *BusinessToday*, and *PRNews*, which also honored Trident as a top 100 Agency Elite firm in 2023.

WEBER SHANDWICK

909 Third Avenue, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10022
917/822-1553
webershandwick.com/expertise/crisis-reputation-defense

Peter Duda, President Global Crisis & Issues
pduda@webershandwick.com

Crisis and issues response often has greater reputational impact than the situation itself; we help clients prepare for, navigate and lead through these situations.

How an organization responds to a crisis or issue may have a more substantial impact on stakeholders' perceptions than the situation itself. Our multi-disciplinary, global team of crisis communications experts advises clients at the intersection of business, public policy, geopolitical risk and cultural transformation. We help clients mitigate vulnerabilities, develop and validate communications strategies, and provide real-time counsel to help them navigate risk and reward in a complex and ever-changing world. Informed by AI-driven technology and human analysis, we make sense of millions of signals and narratives to provide context and perspective, predict trends, and deliver incisive strategic recommendations. ○

How not to speak in public

By Fraser Seitel

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is, forgive me, a wimp.



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*.

A bureaucrat's bureaucrat, Mayorkas is the epitome of the gutless political appointee: prissy, proper, halting-in-speech and oh-so-cautious when it comes to answering questions about his job or policies. No wonder Secretary Mayorkas has become the bane of Congressional Republicans, the poster boy for President Biden's disastrous border immigration policies, which will form the basis of—

groan—Donald Trump's 2024 campaign to retake the American presidency.

So, there wasn't anything unusual when, at the end of October, Mayorkas slid into the torture seat before the U.S. Senate to endure a predictable tongue-lashing from his archenemy Josh Hawley, the unctuous Senator from Missouri. On this morning, Hawley was particularly enraged by a DHS employee who surreptitiously posted anti-Israel messages on social media. After Mayorkas flailed out to object, Hawley thundered, "Don't come to this hearing room when Israel has been invaded ... with Jewish students threatened for their lives ... and you have employees celebrating genocide ... and you're saying it's despicable for me to ask the question."

With Mayorkas bristling, the aggrieved Senator, on cue, yielded back to the chair. Just like always. But suddenly, something came over the terminally timid Mayorkas that made this particular scene gruelingly different.

"Mr. Chairman," said Mayorkas, "Senator Hawley takes an adversarial approach toward me. Perhaps he doesn't know my own background. I am the child of a Holocaust survivor. My mother lost all her family at the hands of the Nazis. So, I find his tone to be entirely misplaced and disrespectful of me and my heritage."

With the stunned Hawley sputtering in the background, the hearing moved on. Mayorkas had, by getting unusually personal, for once won the day.

This brings us full circle to December's pathetic Congressional crucifixion of the three embarrassing college presidents.

See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil

The early December House of Representatives appearance to discuss the outbreak of anti-Semitism on college campuses by the presidents of Harvard, MIT and the University of Pennsylvania has become, in a remarkably short amount of time, a cautionary public relations tale on how not to speak in public.

Their mealy-mouthed testimonies—nearly identical in each case—were tributes to equivocation, evasion, changing the subject and bothsidesism. Each so misread the gravity of the situation that Penn President Liz Magill almost instantaneously lost her job, Harvard President Claudine Gay lost her credibility and MIT President Sally Kornbluth lost her reputation as a world-class scientific intellect.

President Kornbluth, in fact, never should have been at the hearing in the first place. While UPenn and Harvard were hotbeds of anti-Semitic activity, MIT's flare-ups were more muted. While Magill and Gay were newcomers to their universities, Kornbluth had been a respected scientist at MIT for nearly three decades. A month before the fateful Congressional appearance, Kornbluth launched a Standing Together Against Hate initiative at MIT. But while the President of Columbia University—the scene of heated anti-Semitism disputes—successfully ducked the Congressional invitation, the MIT President naively accepted. Big mistake.

After listening to Kornbluth unravel before Congress, MIT student Talia Khan sadly concluded, "I know the President and think she has a heart, but I didn't see that in her testimony."

And that, dear public relations readers, is the point. Instead of following their hearts, as Alejandro Mayorkas did, the under-siege university presidents decided, to their ultimate reputational detriment, to follow their lawyers. It was a fatal mistake.

In a crisis, counsel and/or not 'context'

Ironically, both Harvard and UPenn used the same Washington white-shoe law firm, WilmerHale, to advise their presidents on testifying before Congress. President Kornbluth, who, like Secretary Mayorkas is Jewish and has Holocaust survivors as part of her family, also reportedly met with the same law firm.

Summoning lawyers to advise in crisis isn't unusual for universities or corporations, presidents or CEOs.

The reason lawyers like WilmerHale get

the first call in critical Congressional testimony is because most university presidents or CEOs don't want to go to jail. Makes sense. So, the counsel that the WilmerHale's of the world generally recommend is to stay vague, non-specific and contextual. Don't stick your neck out or get too personal, they advise, and live to fight another day.

Public relations counselors, on the other hand, are more concerned with safeguarding one's reputation than deceptively dodging bullets to avoid the slammer. Tell the truth, read the room and make it personal is the advice that good public relations counselors proffer.

Accordingly, the key moment in the House hearing came when bulldog Republican Elise Stefanik asked the three presidents whether calling for the genocide of Jews would violate their school's code of conduct. When pushed to answer yes or no, soon-to-be former President Magill responded, "It is a context-dependent decision." President Gay agreed, "It can be depending on the context." To which Rep. Stefanik now famously responded, "It does not depend on the 'context.' The answer is 'yes,' and that's why you should resign."

Harvard's President. Gay, unlike Ms. Magill, hasn't resigned yet. Nor is she likely to any time soon. But maybe next time she's faced with a crisis aimed squarely at ruining her reputation, she'll think twice about hiring lawyers to do the work more suited to the expertise of experienced public relations counselors. ○

PR brief

BPD acquires Revive

Revive, which became part of Weber Shandwick in 2016, has been formally acquired by BPD, a health system marketing services company headquartered in Boca Raton, FL. The sale was first announced in October.

BPD and Revive will continue to operate as independent brands in the market. Revive CEO Chris Bevelto will stay on as president of Revive, and the rest of the Revive leadership team will remain in place.

"Revive has been delivering proven marketing, branding and communications results for clients for many years, and brings their additional depth, capabilities and expertise in provider marketing and communications to BPD," said BPD co-Founder and CEO Jason Brown.

BPD, a portfolio company of WindRose Health Investors, provides services including market-opportunity sizing and analysis, marketing strategy, branding, talent acquisition and retention, service line differentiation, service line promotion, precision marketing and end-to-end data analytics to client roster that includes more than 250 hospitals.

"The combination of BPD and Revive will allow us to bring the most experienced and forward-thinking team in the industry to bear in helping brands reimagine their roles, reinvent their businesses and transform their impact on health in the U.S.," said Bevelto.

Tax planning insights for 2024

By Dominic Rovano

As we approach the new year, many companies—including PR and marketing agencies—are turning their focus to year-end tax planning to help position their business for success in 2024. By developing a strategic plan with a knowledgeable tax professional and implementing proactive measures, PR firms can minimize tax liabilities, uncover hidden opportunities, optimize cash flow and prepare for a prosperous and tax-efficient year ahead.



Dominic Rovano, CPA, is a Partner at Armani-no LLP with significant experience serving professional services firms. He focuses on delivering excellent client service as he helps clients satisfy their financial reporting requirements by providing tax, assurance and other advisory services

The following points provide a high-level overview of recent tax-law changes, general tax planning insights and important tax reminders

to help you prepare for the year ahead, including the timing of Qualified Business Income deductions, using net operating losses to your advantage, updating your retirement plans and more.

Evaluate your business and tax plans before year-end

Before you begin your 2024 planning, reviewing your current business model can help you determine if it requires any changes or adjustments. Various business models may have different tax implications due to factors such as the classification of income, deductions, credits and compliance requirements. It's also a good time to review new deductions and credits that may reduce your overall tax liability, such as small business or R&D tax credits.

Revisit retirement plan

Due to an update from the SECURE Act, businesses now have until the 2024 tax extension date to amend or enhance their retirement plans with a retroactive date of December 31, 2023. Businesses can take advantage of the extra time to evaluate retirement plan options and discuss with their tax advisor and pension consultants.

Contributions to retirement plans also increase every year. Make sure to encourage your employees to revisit their contributions for possible increases effective January 1, 2024. In addition, your HR and Finance

teams should be ready to communicate these changes and monitor compliance as we settle into the new year.

Carry Net Operating Losses (NOLs) forward

Since there is no limit on the amount of NOL that a business can carry forward to future tax years, businesses can take full advantage of any losses their company may have incurred throughout the year. As your business profitability may vary over the years, carrying NOLs forward can help neutralize your taxable income in more profitable years.

Utilize Qualified Business Income (QBI) deductions

The QBI deduction is a tax benefit that can be beneficial for a variety of business owners. It allows eligible taxpayers to deduct up to 20 percent of qualified business income from pass-through entities such as partnerships, S corporations and certain trusts and estates. It may be beneficial to work with your tax professional to help you prepare an income and tax projection and review key requirements for QBI deductions such as qualified income level, wage expense and qualified fixed assets.

Consider paying your accounts payable by year-end

Cash-basis taxpayers who pay accounts payable before the end of the tax year can reduce their taxable income and deduct the expenses associated with the payable in the current year. However, it's important to evaluate your specific cash flow capabilities to ensure that paying off AP doesn't cause undue strain on your working capital.

Review ERC claims not received with reputable CPA firm

As the year draws to a close, businesses are reminded of a crucial deadline that could impact their financial landscape. The IRS has recently issued an update to its moratorium on processing claims for the Employee Retention Credit (ERC). The IRS encourages companies that have applied for credits but have not yet received them to have their credits reviewed by a reputable CPA firm. If you feel you claimed a refund under false pretenses, you have until January 1, 2024, to withdraw your application without penalties or fees. In addition, the IRS is allowing businesses that have already received ERC money but have later found that their applications were submitted using incorrect information, to return funds by January 1 without penalties or fees.

If you applied for or received ERC money through a company that guaranteed qualification, the IRS advises a swift review of

your original application with a reputable CPA firm. Some warning signs include:

Contracts fees contingent upon ERC dollars.

- ERC estimates provided before eligibility was assessed.

- Supply chain disruption as the reason for qualification.

- Federal guidelines (OSHA, etc.) used in place of applicable restrictive government orders.

Standard mileage rate

While the standard mileage rate hasn't yet been announced for 2024, keep in mind that the IRS should be revealing the updated information soon. The current standard rate is 65.5 cents per mile for business travel. Be sure to alert your HR or Finance team so that reimbursements made in 2024 are provided using the most current rates.

As PR and marketing agencies navigate the complex landscape of year-end tax planning, strategic steps taken now can pave the way for financial success in the coming year. By working with a tax professional to leverage deductions and capitalize on incentives, agencies can optimize their financial positions and use tax savings to invest in their business.

We saw deal flow slow down a bit as we closed out 2023. We anticipate the M&A market to pick up again during the first two quarters of 2024. I will provide some insights into the latest market in our next article. ○

PR brief

MWW Group settles PPP case

MWW Group has settled a federal suit alleging that it violated the False Claims Act by taking a second loan of \$2 million from the Paycheck Protection Program to which it was not entitled because it was registered under the Foreign Agent Registration Act.

The PR firm said its former CFO was unaware that a 2021 change in the law made it ineligible for the second loan.

It also notes that due to the ambiguity of the FARA statute, it is in question whether MWW was actually required to file the FARA report during these periods and if it was, in fact, ineligible for the loan.

MWW said it voluntarily agreed to reimburse the Small Business Administration the equivalent of the loan to avoid any appearance of impropriety whatsoever. The firm's insurance carrier will pay a chunk of that outlay.

Under the settlement MWW will pay the US \$2.29 million, plus interest. A whistleblower, unaffiliated with MWW or the government, will receive \$229,000 as part of the U.S. recovery.

The Justice Dept. noted that MWW fully cooperated with its investigation and the resolution of the matter.

Congress created the PPP in March 2020 as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act.

Ex-Clinton press sec joins team Harris

Brian Fallon, who served as National Press Secretary for Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential run, is signing on next month as Vice President's Kamala Harris' Campaign Communications Director.

The Washington Post reports that Fallon is known for a hard-hitting, nimble communications style.

Currently, he serves as President of D.C. PA shop Barracks Row Media, and Executive Director of Demand Justice, an advocacy group that pushes for more liberal justices on the courts.

Besides Clinton, Fallon was an Aide to Senator Chuck Schumer and former Attorney General Eric Holder. ○



Brian Fallon

Amazon adds Origin Advocacy to D.C. roster

Amazon has signed on Origin Advocacy, the firm of a former aide to Sen. Ted Cruz, for issues related to consumer protection, privacy and drones.

Amazon's Prime Air drone service currently delivers to two locations in the U.S.: College Station (TX) and Lockeford (CA).

Origin Advocacy's Sean McLean did a nearly six-year stint with Cruz, where he managed issues before the Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee.

He launched his firm after serving in the Trump White House as a liaison with the Commerce Dept.

Amazon suffered a government relations setback this month with the departure of Sean Cassidy, who was the company's point person in dealing with relations with the Federal Aviation Administration.

He joined Amazon Prime in 2015 and rose to the Director, Safety, Flying Operations & Regulatory Affairs position.

Prior to Amazon, Cassidy was a pilot for 18 years at Alaska Airlines and First VP at the Air Line Pilots Assn. union. ○

LLYC cuts ties with alleged Cuban spy

LLYC has cut ties with Manuel Rocha, the 73-year-old former American diplomat who has been charged with spying for Cuba.

He had been working as a Senior International Business Advisor at LLYC at the time of his Dec. 4 arrest but is no longer associated with the firm, according to a statement from LLYC.

Rocha joined LLYC in September. LLYC noted that he served as a Senior Advisor, not at the executive level, focusing on business development matters.

"The decision to sever ties with Mr. Rocha underscores our organization's steadfast commitment to the highest standards of ethical and legal conduct," it said.

Though the allegations against Rocha are unrelated to his involvement with the firm, LLYC "will collaborate fully with the au-



Manuel Rocha



thorities if required, providing any information deemed necessary."

Rocha served as U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia from 2000 to 2002 and worked in the U.S. interests section in Cuba during the 1990s. He also held posts in the Dominican Republic, Italy, Argentina, Mexico and Argentina.

The case against Rocha exposes "one of the highest-reaching and longest-lasting infiltrations of the United States government by a foreign agent," said Attorney General Merrick Garland.

The U.S. is LLYC's No. 3 market, trailing Spain and Mexico. ○

Herald Group hires DDC's Bertles

Public affairs firm The Herald Group has added Bill Bertles as a Partner on its executive team.

Bertles was previously at DDC for 25 years, most recently serving as SVP and Partner. He has over three decades of experience across a broad range of industries, from energy and healthcare to financial services and technology. At The Herald Group, Bertles will lead the firm's business development efforts.

"His extensive experience, growth-oriented approach, and proven leadership will make Bill an invaluable asset as THG continues to add to its team of experts," said The Herald Group Managing Partner Matt Well. ○



Bill Bertles

Digital pro Dua joins SKDK

Avika Dua, who was Digital Director for New York Governor Kathy Hochul, has joined SKDK as a VP to work on both political and corporate campaigns.

Besides working for the Empire State's first female governor, Dua was digital director for Alex Padilla, the Golden State's first Hispanic Senator.

During the 2020 Democratic presidential primary campaign, Dua managed \$21 million in media spending for Pete Buttigieg's run.

She began her career at Google, handling web marketing efforts.

Pia Carusone, president of SKDK Political unit, said Dua's experience in high-profile campaigns will be invaluable to the firm as it "continues to offer the most integrated advertising services in the industry." ○



Avika Dua

Yorktown Solutions vouches for Ukraine's nuke biz

Yorktown Solutions has been working to restore and maintain a positive image of the Ukrainian nuclear energy industry under a one-year \$960,000 agreement.

The firm has been raising awareness of the specific and evolving risks emanating from Russia's occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, which is the largest nuke facility in Europe.

Reuters reported on Dec. 2 that Zaporizhzhia lost power after the last transmission line to Ukraine-controlled territory was disrupted, but the connection was repaired.

The plant doesn't generate power but requires a supply of electricity to cool one of its four reactors, which is in a state of "hot conservation."

Yorktown is working under an agreement with the union that represents employees at Energoatom, the Ukrainian government entity that oversees nuclear facilities.

Daniel Vajdich, Yorktown's President, has worked on the presidential campaigns of Republicans Ted Cruz, Scott Walker and Mitt Romney. ○

Accenture brands Saudi Arabia's 'Fun' city

Accenture and its Droga5 creative shop handled the branding and marketing strategy for Qiddiya City, which is pitched as a one-of-a-kind entertainment designation.

Crown prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz on Dec. 7 unveiled plans for Qiddiya, which is projected to have a population of 600,000.

Located 40 miles from Riyadh, Qiddiya is projected to attract 48

million visitors annually once construction is complete for its golf courses, motorsports racetrack, water park, Six Flags theme park, sports stadium and the world's largest Olympic museum.

Qiddiya, a project of the Public Investment Fund, is part of the Saudi Vision 2030 to modernize the Kingdom's economy.

Accenture received \$2.8 million for its branding work. ○

Edelman handles Masdar COP28 press

Edelman has picked up an additional \$500,000 worth of work to provide COP28 press office support for Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company-Masdar.

Masdar bills itself as the United Arab Emirates' global clean energy powerhouse across renewables and green hydrogen.

It operates in more than 40 countries and has invested about \$30 billion in solar, wind, energy storage, waste-to-energy and geothermal projects.

Edelman's 25-day agreement calls for a dozen staffers stationed at the Dubai COP28 site and an additional 13 employees across the firm's network working on a "follow the sun" basis. The climate conference began Nov. 30 and runs through Dec. 12.

Sultan Al Jaber, who chairs Masdar and leads Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, presides over COP28.

Edelman handled Al Jaber's Dec. 2 unveiling of the global decarbonization accelerator initiative designed to speed up the energy transition and cut global emissions.

In the three-month period leading up to COP28, Masdar worked with Teneo on communications counsel and strategy development. That so-called global CEO advisory hauled in \$1.6 million for prepping Masdar for COP28.

Geoff Morrell, President of Teneo's Global Strategy and Comms. practice, spearheaded that work. He was EVP-Comms. and Advocacy for British Petroleum in London and Washington. He led BP's effort to rebound from its Deepwater Horizon disaster. ○

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.

Von Batten-Montague-York, L.C., Washington, D.C., **registered Nov. 20, 2023 for Sokam Holdings**, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, concerning engaging with members of the Biden Administration, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate regarding policy and legislation to increase trade and investments between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United States.

Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP, Washington D.C., **registered Nov. 27, 2023 for Government of the Federated States of Micronesia**, Kolonia, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, regarding providing legal and advisory services.

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.

4th Street Communications, Washington, D.C., **registered Dec. 8, 2023 for National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers**, Washington, D.C., concerning policy and funding related to the preservation of Tribal Nations cultural resources and sacred places.

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, Washington, D.C., **registered Dec. 4, 2023 for Dropbox, Inc.**, San Francisco, Calif., regarding issues related to intermediary liability, content moderation, and consumer privacy.

theGROUP DC, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Dec. 13, 2023 for National Rental Home Council**, Washington, D.C., regarding issues related to the single-family rental home marketplace and industry.

The Raben Group, Washington, D.C., **registered Dec. 7, 2023 for Feeding America**, Chicago, Ill., concerning policy and funding related to The Emergency Food Assistance Program.

2024 PR Buyer's Guide



Annual Reports/Design/Branding	81
Associations	81
Awards	82
Broadcast Monitoring	83
Celebrities	84
Clipping Services	84
Copywriters	84
CPA/Consulting Services	84
Crisis Management	84
Digital Media Tours	86
Directories	86
Editorial Distribution & Services.....	87
Education	87
Electronic Newsfeeds/Satellite Svcs.	87
Executive Coaching	87
Executive Search	88
Graphic Design Services.....	88
Influencer Marketing.....	88
Integrated Marketing & PR	88
Management Consultants	89
Measurement and Evaluation.....	89
Media Lists	89
Media Monitoring	89
Media Tours/Roadshows	89
Media Training	89
Mergers & Acquisitions	90
Newsletters.....	90
Newswires/Press Services	90
Press Release Distribution	91
Public Relations Networks	91
Public Service Announcements	91
Radio	92
Research	94
Satellite Media Tours	94
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	96
Social Media	96
Speakers Service (Talent)	96
Special Events	97
Speechwriting	97
Television (TV) Production	97
Video	97
Virtual Meeting Solutions	97
Webcasting	97
Website Development	97
Index to Listed Companies	100



Annual Reports/Design/Branding

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

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 234 Outlet Pointe Blvd., 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.

CMO Council, 1494 Hamilton Way, San Jose, CA 95125. 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.

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. (HSMAI), 1660 International Dr., #600, McLean, VA 22102. 703/506-3280. americas.hsmi.org. Robert A. Gilbert, Pres. & CEO.

Institute for Public Relations (IPR), 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. nage.com.

National Black Public Relations Society, 14636 Runnymede St., Van Nuys, CA 91405. 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. 703/518-7931. www.womenlegislators.org. Jody Thomas, Exec. Dir.

National Hispanic Media Coalition, 12825 Philadelphia St., Whittier, CA 90601. 626/792-6462. info@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., Alexandria, VA 22314. 703/562-7700. www.niri.org. Al Rickard, 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), 1660 International Dr., #600, 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.

Page (Arthur W. Page Society), 230 Park Ave., 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, 6th fl., New York, NY 10036. 917/439-9201. www.prcouncil.net. Kim Sample, Pres.

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. Victoria Stanton, Chapter Administrator.

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. prsancc.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. 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. Cheri Carpenter, Dir., Comms.

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. sabew.org. Stephanie Klimstra, Exec. Dir.

Society for Technical Communication, Fairfax, VA. 703/522-4114. www.stc.org. Tim Shaw, Interim Exec. Dir.

Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), info@satw.org; satw.org.

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.

APEX Awards, Communications Concepts, Inc., 6604 Richmond Rd., #19, Williamsburg, VA 23188. 703/643-2200. info@apexawards.com; apexawards.com. Ken Turtoro, Exec. Editor.

Association TRENDS Annual Trendy Awards, Columbia Books & Information Services, 1530 Wilson Blvd., #400, Arlington, VA 22209. 888/265-0600. www.associationtrends.com/trendy-awards/.

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.

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 fl., New York, NY 10001. 212/683-4300. clios.com. Nicole Purcell, CEO.

Communicator Awards, Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts, 22 West 21st St., 7th fl. 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.

Awards

Adrian Awards, Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association Int'l., 1660 International Dr., McLean, VA 22102. 703/506-3280. americas.hsmi.org. Ellen Wilson, Washington, D.C. 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.

Gold Quill Awards, Int'l. Association of Business Communicators (IABC), 330 N. Wabash Ave., #2000, Chicago, IL 60611. 312/321-6868. www.iabc.com.

Gold, Silver, Bronze Anvil Awards of Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Among Additional Awards, 120 Wall St., 21st flr., New York, NY 10005-4024. 212/460-1400. www.prsa.org. Karen Mateo, Chief Comms. Officer.

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.

Jack Felton Medal for Lifetime Achievement, Institute for Public Relations, 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, 1660 International Dr., #600, McLean, VA 22102. 212/251-7255. info@nywici.org; nywici.org.

Mercury Awards, Galaxy Awards, iNOVA Awards and More, 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.

New York Festivals, TV & Film Awards, 641 Lexington Ave., 13th flr., New York, NY 10022. 212/271-5278. www.newyorkfestivals.com.

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.

Power of Association Awards, American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), 1575 I St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005. 202/371-0940. www.asaecenter.org.

PR News Awards, Access Intelligence, LLC. www.prnewsonline.com/pr-news-awards.

PRSA/NCC National Capital Excellence in Comm. Awards, 200 Little Falls St., #205, Falls Church, VA 22046. 703/691-9212. prsance.org.

Public Relations and Marketing Excellence Awards, Business Intelligence Group. 909/529-2737. www.bintelligence.com.

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.

She Runs It Woman of the Year Award, She Runs It (Formerly Advertising Women of NY), New York, NY. 212/221-7969. sherunsit.org.

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.

SIIA CODiE Awards, Software & Information Industry Association, 1620 I St., N.W., #501, Washington, DC 20005. 202/289-7442. siia.net/codie/.

Silver Apple Awards, Marketing Club of New York, New York, NY. 646/741-4771. marketingclubny.org.

Society for Technical Communication, STC Awards, Fairfax, VA. 703/522-4114. www.stc.org. Tim Shaw, Interim Exec. Dir.

Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), SATW Foundation Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Competition, Oakbrook Terrace. info@satw.org; satw.org.

Telly Awards, The, Ashland, KY. 212/675-3555. www.tellyawards.com.



THE STEVIE® AWARDS
The World's Premier Business Award Competitions

The Stevie Awards, 10560 Main St., #519, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703/547-8389. www.StevieAwards.com. Maggie Miller, Pres.

The Stevie® Awards, widely regarded as the world's premier business awards, are conferred in nine programs including The American Business Awards®, The International Business Awards®, the Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards, the German Stevie Awards, the Stevie Awards for Great Employers, the Stevie Awards for Sales & Customer Service, the Stevie Awards for Women in Business, the Middle East & North Africa Stevie Awards, and the Stevie Awards for Technology Excellence (coming in 2024).

Nominations may be submitted in a wide variety of categories honoring achievement in public relations, marketing, management, human resources, customer service, new products, technology, websites, videos, events, and more.

The Stevie Award trophy, designed by the firm that manufactures the Oscar and other leading trophies, is one of the world's most coveted prizes.

Visit www.StevieAwards.com to learn about all of the Stevie Award programs.

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.

Broadcast Monitoring Services

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

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.



Celebrity Access, Inc., 1775 East Palm Canyon Dr., Suite 605-5627, Palm Springs, CA 92263-7201. 818/508-1300; fax: 888/367-7574. glenn@celebrityaccessinc.com; www.celebrityaccessinc.com. Glenn Rosenblum.

Celebrity Access, Inc. a one-stop shop for corporations seeking the services of a celebrity for almost any occasion. We run the gamut from promotional events to product launches, product endorsements, media tours, direct response marketing and infomercials. No upfront costs, competitive pricing and A to Z personal service.

World Class Speakers & Entertainers, 5158 Clareton Drive, Ste. 1034, Agoura Hills (County of Los Angeles), CA 91376. 818/991-5400. jkessler@wcSpeakers.com; wcse@wcSpeakers.com; www.wcspeakers.com. Joseph I. Kessler, Pres.

See full listing under Speakers Service (Talent).

Clipping Services

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.



CoverageBook

CoverageBook, coveragebook.com.

CoverageBook makes it easy for PR people to showcase & measure the impact of their public relations work.

It replaces time-consuming tasks like collating screenshots, sourcing metrics and engagement rates, turning coverage into beautifully designed reports, in minutes.

Voted consistently "Easiest to use PR analytics tool" on G2, over 15,500 global PR professionals now use CoverageBook as their showcasing, reporting and measurement solution.

Copywriters

Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

See full listing under Crisis Management and Media Training.

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

CPA/Consulting Services

Gould+Partners
EST. 2001
M&A REPRESENTATION. PR FIRM VALUATIONS.

Gould+Partners LLC, One Penn Plaza, Suite 3200, New York, NY 10119. 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., 19th flr., New York, NY 10016. 212/999-5585. www.5wpr.com. Dara Busch, Matthew Caiola, Co-CEOs.

AJB Communications, 5 Conifer Lane, Avon, CT 06001. 917/783-1680. ajbcomms@gmail.com; www.ajbcomms.com. Andrew Blum.

August, 333 7th Ave., 9th flr., New York, NY 10001. 323/892-5562. Inquiries@AugustCo.com; www.augustco.com. Steven Goldberg, CEO.

Avaans Media, Remote Team, 1525 E Armando Dr., Long Beach, CA 90807. 424/625-4292. t@avaansmedia.com; avaansmedia.com. Tara Coomans, Founder and CEO.

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

Learn about Axia's crisis management expertise: www.axiapr.com/crisis

BerlinRosen, 15 Maiden Lane, Suite 1600, New York, NY 10038. growth@berlinrosen.com; www.berlinrosen.com. Valerie Berlin, Jonathan Rosen, Principals & Co-Founders; Andrew Friedman, Exec. VP, Crisis & Legal Affairs.

Blaine Group, Inc., The, 8665 Wilshire Blvd., #301, Beverly Hills, CA 90211. 310/360-1499. www.blainegroupinc.com. Devon Blaine, Pres./CEO.

BoardroomPR, 1776 N. Pine Island Rd., #320, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33322. 954/370-8999. boardroompr.com. Don Silver, COO; Todd Templin, Exec. VP.

Bospar, San Francisco, CA. 844/5-BOSPAP. results@bospar.com; bospar.com. Chris Boehlke, Curtis Sparrer, Tom Carpenter, Principals.

C Street Advisory Group, 641 Lexington Ave., 14th flr., New York, NY 10022. www.thecstreet.com. Jon Henes, Founder & CEO; Jackie Rubin, Pres., Strategic Comms.; Luke Wolf, Mng. Dir.

Cloudbreak Communications, 917/596-1445. alex@cloudbreakcommunications.com; www.cloudbreakcommunications.com. Alex Dudley, Principal.

Collected Strategies, 121 East 24th St., 10th flr., New York, NY 10016. 212/379-2072. www.collectedstrategies.com. Scott Bisang, Jim Golden, Jude Gorman, Ed Hammond, Nick Lamplough, Dan Moore, Partners.

Cornerstone Public Affairs, 800 Maine Ave., SW, 7th flr., Washington, DC 20024. 202/669-0575. ckaufman@cgagroup.com; www.cgagroup.com. Campbell Kaufman, Principal and Mng. Dir.

Crosswind Media and Public Relations, 501 Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701. 512/537-1414. info@crosswindpr.com; crosswindpr.com. Thomas Graham, Pres. & CEO.

Dentons Global Advisors, 1900 K St., N.W., Washington, DC 20006. 202/759-5100. www.dentonsglobaladvisors.com. Edward Reilly, CEO.

Dragon Horse Agency, 848 1st Ave. North, #200, Naples, FL 34102. 305/306-3992; 239/325-5088. info@dragonhorseagency.com; www.dragonhorseagency.com. Julie Koester, P. Blake Renda, Founders/Co-CEOs.

Edelman, 250 Hudson St., 16th flr., New York, NY 10013. 212/768-0550. www.edelman.com. Richard Edelman, CEO.



Feintuch Communications, 11 East 44th St., Suite 1201, New York, NY 10017. 212/808-4900. info@feintuchpr.com; www.feintuchcommunications.com. Henry Feintuch, Pres.

Feintuch Communications enjoys deep crisis communications counseling experience including non-profits, growth companies and the *Fortune* 500. Our senior crisis faculty can help to enhance and protect your organization's reputation.

In crisis mode now? Count on us! We are well-versed in helping organizations work their way through challenging situations including shareholder/corporate governance issues, employee or community challenges, product recalls, litigation, government investigations and more.

For those organizations planning ahead, our services include plan development; scenario planning and testing; c-suite and manager training; and mes-

sage delivery. The best crisis plan? It's the one developed NOW – before your organization's reputation is under attack.

FGS Global, 909 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. 212/687-8080. fgsglobal.com. George Sard, Roland Rudd, Carter Eskew, Co-Chairmen.

Finn Partners, 1675 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. 212/715-1600. www.finnpartners.com. Jessica Berk Ross, Mng. Partner, PA Global Practice Leader, Crisis Mgmt. Lead Coord. Washington, DC.

FleishmanHillard, 200 N. Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63102. 314/982-1700. fleishmanhillard.com. John Graham, Chmn.

French/West/Vaughan, 112 East Hargett St., Raleigh, NC 27601. 919/832-6300. fwv-us.com. Rick French, Chmn. & CEO; David Gwyn, Pres./Principal, Natalie Best, COO/Principal.

FTI Consulting Strategic Communications, New York, NY. fticommunications.com. Mark McCall, Global Segment Leader.

G&S Business Communications, 111 West 33rd St., 22nd flr., New York, NY 10120. 212/697-2600. SHalsey@gscommunications.com; www.gscommunications.com. Steve Halsey, Chief Growth Officer.

Gladstone Place Partners, 485 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022. 212/230-5930. www.gladstoneplace.com. Steven Lipin, Chmn. and CEO, Lauren Odell, Partner and COO, Christina Stenson, Felipe Ucrós, Vanessa Esparza, partners.

H/Advisors Abernathy, 230 Park Ave., 23rd flr., New York, NY 10169. 212/371-5999. abernathy.h-advisors.global. Tom Johnson, CEO; Carina Davidson, Pres.

ICR, 685 Third Ave., 2nd flr., New York, NY 10017. 646/277-1200. tom.ryan@icrinc.com; icrinc.com. Thomas Ryan, CEO, Don Duffy, Pres.

Infinite Global, New York Office: 21 W. 38th St., 16th flr., New York, NY 10018. 917/602-0545. infiniteglobal.com. Jamie Diaferia, Founder & CEO, Zach Olsen, Pres.

Joele Frank, 22 Vanderbilt Ave., 18th flr., New York, NY 10017. 212/355-4449. info@joelefrank.com; www.joelefrank.com. Joele Frank, Mng. Partner; Matthew Sherman, Pres.

KARV Communications, 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017. 212/333-0275. www.karv.global. Andrew Frank, Founder and Pres., Eric Andrus, Exec. VP.

Kekst CNC, U.S. Headquarters: 1675 Broadway, 30th flr., New York, NY 10019. 212/521-4800. www.kekstcnc.com. Jeremy Fielding, Bernhard Meising, Co-CEOs.

LAG Strategy Corp, Pasadena, Calif. 626/696-3239. stuart@lagstrategy.com; matthew@lagstrategy.com; lagstrategy.com. Stuart Pfeifer, Matthew Fern, Co-Founders.

Leidar, 1500 K St., NW, Washington, DC 20005. Contact@Leidar.com; www.Leidar.com. Rolf Olsen, CEO; Philip Armstrong, John Lovallo, Maxwell Marcucci, Mng. Dirs.

Marx Layne & Company, 31300 Orchard Lake Rd., #100, Farmington Hills, MI 48334. 248/855-6777. mlayne@marxlayne.com; marxlayne.com. Michael Layne, Pres.; Michael Szudarek, Partner.

MikeWorldWide, 1250 Broadway, 3rd flr., New York, NY 10001. 212/704-9727. www.mww.com. Michael Kempner, Founder & CEO.

Montieth & Company, 155 East 44th St., #1610, New York, NY 10017. 646/437-7602. montieth@montiethco.com; montiethco.com. Montieth Illingworth, CEO and Global Mng. Partner.

Orangefiery, 135 W. 50th St., Suite 200, New York, NY 10020. 415/384-8677. mike@orangefiery.com; www.orangefiery.com. Mike Kuczkowski, Founder & CEO; Diana Dopfel, Sr. VP.

Padilla, 1101 West River Pkwy., #400, Minneapolis, MN 55415. 612/455-1700. padillaco.com. Chris Werle, Sr. VP.

Peppercomm, Inc., 425 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022. 212/931-6100. www.peppercomm.com. Steve Cody, CEO and Founder.

Public Communications Inc., 161 N. Clark St., #2050, Chicago, IL 60601. 312/558-1770. pcipr.com. Jill Allread, CEO, Craig Pugh, Pres., Pamela Oettel, COO/CFO.

Public Policy Holding Company (PPHC), 800 North Capitol St., NW, Suite 800, Washington DC, 20002. 202/688-0020. www.pphcompany.com; inquiries@pphcompany.com; inquires@concordantadvisory.com. Simon Lee, Chmn., Bd. of Directors; G. Stewart Hall, CEO.

Reevemark, 521 Fifth Ave., 27th flr., New York, NY 10175. 212/433-4600.
www.reevemark.com. Brandy Bergman, CEO and Founding Partner.



Reputation Doctor® LLC, 244 Fifth Ave., #2620, New York, NY 10001. 212/595-8500. mpaul@reputationdoctor.com; www.reputationdoctor.com. Mike Paul, President & CEO.

Risa Heller Communications, 233 Broadway, Suite 2160, New York, NY 10279. 646/695-9515. info@risaheller.com; www.risaheller.com. Risa Heller, CEO.

ROKK Solutions, 2020 K St., NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20006. 202/280-2007. lindsay@rokkolutions.com; www.rokkolutions.com. Lindsay Singleton, Chief Dev. Officer.

Sachs Media, 114 S. Duval St., Tallahassee, FL 32301. 850/222-1996, Fax: 850/224-2882. www.sachsmedia.com.

Sitrick And Company, Los Angeles, New York, Washington, D.C.. 800/288-8809. www.sitrick.com. Michael S. Sitrick, Chmn. and CEO.

SKDK, 1150 18th St., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036. info@skdknick.com; skdknick.com. Doug Thronell, CEO, Jacqui Newman, COO.

Sloane & Company, 1 World Trade Center, 285 Fulton St., New York, NY 10007. info@sloanep.com; sloanep.com. Darren Brandt, Whit Clay, Co-CEOs.

Stanton, 909 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. 212/366-5300. info@stantonprm.com; www.stantonprm.com. Alex Stanton, CEO.

Subject Matter+Kivvit, 1201 New York Ave. NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005. www.teamsubjectmatter.com; www.kivvit.com. Nicole Cornish, CEO.

The Levinson Group (TLG), 200 Park Ave. South, Suite 1218, New York, NY 10003. 202/244-1785. www.TLGCommunications.com.

THUNDER 11

Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

Thunder11 is a strategic communications firm passionate about big ideas and relentless execution. Our clients in healthcare, tech and public affairs find us when it's time for a launch, for change, for growth, and for big opportunities. Our intelligence and integrity and interpersonal skills set us apart in the world of PR. We believe in investing in top talent, being smart and proactive, and delivering concrete, breakout results.

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

Trident DMG, 1120 20th St., NW, Suite 700 N, Washington, DC 20036. 202/899-3834. TridentDMG.com. Josh Galper, Adam Goldberg, Eleanor McManus, Co-Founders and Partners.

Weber Shandwick, 909 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. 917/822-1553. www.webershandwick.com. Peter Duda, Pres., Global Crisis & Issues.

Digital Media Tours



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:

- Earned and Guaranteed Media

Options

- Satellite, Internet and Radio Tours (Virtual, Studio or Remote)
- Customized Media Days/Junkets
- B-Roll & Sound Bites
- Co-op Alternatives
- Audio News Releases
- Matte Releases

Directories

Almanac of American Politics, The, Columbia Books & Information Services (CBIS), 1530 Wilson Blvd., #400, Arlington, VA 22209. 888/265-0600. www.columbiabooks.com.

Business Information Resources Directory, 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.

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.

Headquarters USA Directory, Omnigraphics, An Infobase Co., 1000 N West St., #1281-230, Wilmington, DE 19801. 800/322-8755. 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), Data and Technology Co. for Gov't, Business and Media, 325 7th St., N.W., #800, Washington, DC 20004. 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, Sunwater Institute, 12358 Parklawn Dr., #220, North Bethesda, MD 20852. 240/753-0941. www.uscongresshandbook.com.

World Radio TV Handbook (WRTH), Radio Data Center, Freising, Germany. www.wrth.com.

Also visit shop.radiodatacenter.net/product/wrth-2023-book.

Editorial Distribution & Services

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

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 Kuhlin 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. 215/895-2400. 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., Master's in Integrated Mktg. 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.

Northwestern University, M.S., Integrated Marketing Comms., Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Mktg. Comms., 1845 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, IL 60208. www.medill.northwestern.edu/imc/.

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.

Seton Hall University, M.A., Communication, 400 South Orange Ave., South Orange, NJ 07079. 973/761-9000. www.shu.edu.

Simmons University, B.A., Communications, 300 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115. 617/521-2000. www.simmons.edu.

Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse, NY. 315/443-4039. newhouse.syr.edu.

Tufts University, Gerald J. & Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Food and Nutrition Policy and Programs, 150 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA 02111. 617/627-5000. nutrition.tufts.edu.

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.

University of Memphis, The, College of Communication and Fine Arts, Dept. of Journalism and Strategic Media, 300

Meeman Journalism Building, Memphis, TN 38152. 901/678-2000. www.memphis.edu/jrsm/index.php. David Arant, Chair, Dept. of Journalism and Strategic Media.

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.

West Virginia University, Online M.S., Integrated Marketing Communications, Reed College of Media, Morgantown, WV. 304/293-6278. marketingcommunications.wvu.edu.

Electronic Newsfeeds/ Satellite Services

Strauss Media STRATEGIES

RADIO • TELEVISION • SOCIAL

Washington, DC • New York • Los Angeles

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

See full listing under SMTs and Radio.

Executive Coaching

JACOBS
CONSULTING & EXECUTIVE COACHING

Jacobs Consulting & Executive Coaching, Asbury Park, NJ/Metro NYC. 917/838-5345. ken@jacobscomm.com; www.jacobscomm.com. Ken Jacobs, PCC, CPC, ELI-MP.

Through executive coaching, we empower the owners, CEOs, and senior executives of PR, marketing and other communications agencies to surpass their goals by becoming more effective, inspired and inspiring leaders.

We also help these agencies grow

Continued at top of next page

JACOBS CONSULTING *continued*

their business, manage for profitability, improve client service, and enhance team performance, communications, and leadership skills. We do so via training and consulting.

My clients say they get added value from working with me because I'm one of the few certified coaches who spent decades in agency management and leadership.

See LinkedIn profile at www.linkedin.com/in/jacobsconsultingcoaching.

Executive Search

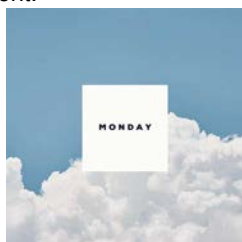
Brian Simon Associates, 1412 Broadway 21st flr., New York, NY 10018. 646/580-6398. brian@briansimonassoc.com; www.briansimonassoc.com. Brian Gabay.



Hechkoff Executive Search Inc., 1350 Ave. of the Americas, NYC, NY 10019. 212/935-2100. mp@hechkoff.com; www.hechkoff.com. Maria Pellicione, Mng. Dir.

Hechkoff Executive Search's strategic communications search practice partners with our clients and focuses on the recruitment and placement of game-changing talent for mid-level to leadership roles, as well as practice build-outs in the areas of public relations, corporate communications, corporate affairs, investor relations, internal communications, sustainability, marketing and product communications, media relations, government affairs, public policy, M&A communications, social media, digital and content communications, and related disciplines.

Our success has been based on relationships developed with our clients and candidates which generates the results necessary for the success of every placement.



Monday Talent, 228 Park Ave. S., Suite 37828, New York, NY 10003. hello@monday-talent.com; monday-talent.com.

We're changing the (recruitment) game. Specializing in the communications, marketing and creative fields, we're a search firm that understands in business, people come first. We're Monday Talent – recruitment's wake-up call.

Monday Talent is committed to helping organizations create atmospheres in which anyone can achieve their full potential. Every decision we make is rooted in our commitment to reimagining recruitment and prioritizing diversity, equity & inclusion above all else. By bringing together diverse perspectives, we've helped companies create welcoming, authentic environments where every voice is valued.



Vetted, Boston, MA. megan@getvettednow.com; www.getvettednow.com. Megan Mooney, Mng. Partner.

Vetted is a boutique recruiting firm that specializes in filling mid-to-senior-level PR & marketing roles for clients across the US. We partner with top integrated agencies, as well as companies in a variety of industries. We can help you hire the right talent to build high-performing, winning teams.

Graphic Design Services

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

Influencer Marketing



INTELLIGENT COMMUNICATIONS

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. We are journalists, producers and directors, researchers, PR professionals and marketers aligned in our relentless pursuit of success 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.

Reach the right audience at the right moment by using the credible voice of an influencer. Whether engaging lifestyle influencers through emotional visuals and storytelling or leveraging veteran thought leaders to educate and inform in understandable ways, our proven approach generates online, "digital word-of-mouth" momentum. We'll tailor a strategy for your campaign that is audience-centric, KPI-driven, content-obsessed and ROI-focused.

4media group also offers: satellite media tours, radio media tours, surveys/market research, full media relations services, public service announcements, media buying, creative video production, podcast production, and social media management.

Integrated Marketing & PR

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

Blaine Group, Inc., The, 8665 Wilshire Blvd., #301, Beverly Hills, CA 90211. 310/360-1499. www.blainegroupinc.com. Devon Blaine, Pres./CEO.



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.

Montieth & Company, 155 East 44th St., #1610, New York, NY 10017. 646/437-7602. montieth@montiethco.com; montiethco.com. Montieth Illingworth, CEO and Global Mng. Partner.

tier one.

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

Management Consultants

Gould+Partners
M&A REPRESENTATION. PR FIRM VALUATIONS.

Gould+Partners LLC, One Penn Plaza, Suite 3200, New York, NY 10119. 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.

Measurement & Evaluation

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.


CoverageBook

CoverageBook, coveragebook.com.

CoverageBook makes it easy for PR people to showcase & measure the impact of their public relations work.

It replaces time-consuming tasks like collating screenshots, sourcing metrics and engagement rates, turning coverage into beautifully designed reports, in minutes.

Voted consistently "Easiest to use PR analytics tool" on G2, over 15,500 global PR professionals now use CoverageBook as their showcasing, reporting and measurement solution.

OWL Research Partners, 8922 N. Kellogg St., B2-01, Portland, OR 97203. 503/348-9456. samara@owlresearchpartners.com; www.owlresearchpartners.com. Samara Omundson.

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

Media Lists

Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

See full listing under Crisis Management and Media Training.

Media Monitoring

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

OWL Research Partners, 8922 N. Kellogg St., B2-01, Portland, OR 97203. 503/348-9456. samara@owlresearchpartners.com; www.owlresearchpartners.com. Samara Omundson.

Media Tours/Roadshows

DEFINITION 6

DEFINITION 6, New York, NY. 678/358-0970. definition6.com/services/. Nikki Kunkle, Dir., Operations, PR Services.

DEFINITION 6 is a passionate group of creatives, writers, producers, and media strategists. We create content that sparks engagement and drives measurable outcomes across platforms.

Through our innovative suite of broadcast and digital PR services, our media relations team builds custom media programs including satellite, virtual and on-site media tours, radio media tours, public service announcements and branded content distribution.

From global brands to innovative startups, our award-winning media tours deliver industry leading results in every market vertical. When you partner with us, we become an extension of your team with a commitment to understanding your brand's message, and a hands-on approach to connecting your

story with consumers.

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.

Strauss Media
STRATEGIES

RADIO • TELEVISION • SOCIAL

Washington, DC • New York • Los Angeles

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

See full listing under SMTs and Radio

Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

See full listing under Crisis Management and Media Training.

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

Media Training

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

Blaine Group, Inc., The, 8665 Wilshire Blvd., #301, Beverly Hills, CA 90211. 310/360-1499. www.blainegroupinc.com. Devon Blaine, Pres./CEO.

Cameron Communications Inc., 55 DuBois St., Darien, CT 06820. 203/952-5758. jim@mediatrainertv.com; www.mediatrainertv.com. Jim Cameron, Pres.; Amy Fond, Senior Trainer.



Feintuch Communications, 11 East 44th St., Suite 1201, New York, NY 10017. 212/808-4900. info@feintuchpr.com; www.feintuchcommunications.com. Henry Feintuch, Pres.

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.

Our courses are both delivered in-person, with live video camera exercises as well as online for multi-national organizations with spokespeople spread out across the time zones. We educate our clients to the nuances of working with the media, getting their messages across, bridging techniques and more. Quotations available upon request.

Montieth & Company, 155 East 44th St., #1610, New York, NY 10017. 646/437-7602. montieth@montiethco.com; montiethco.com. Montieth Illingworth, CEO and Global Mng. Partner.



Newman Group Inc., The, 220 E. 63rd St., New York, NY 10065. 212/838-8371. hello@newmangroup.com; www.newmangroup.com. Richard Newman, Pres.

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.

Building Business Communication Skills, Professionally

The Newman Group, founded by presentation expert Joyce Newman,

is based in New York City. Our team of professional communication coaches regularly trains clients around the globe, from Hong Kong to Los Angeles and from Amsterdam to Dallas.



Scudder Training & Consulting, Ken, 917/226-1681. mail@kenscudder.com; www.kenscudder.com.

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



Ken Scudder

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."



Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

Thunder11 is a strategic communications firm passionate about big ideas and relentless execution. Our clients in healthcare, tech and public affairs find us when it's time for a launch, for change, for growth, and for big opportunities. Our intelligence and integrity and interpersonal skills set us apart in the world of PR. We believe in investing in top talent, being smart and proactive, and delivering concrete, breakout results.

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

Words Normalize Behavior LLC, wordsnormalizebehavior@gmail.com; wordsnormalizebehavior.com. Michael Franklin.

Mergers & Acquisitions



Gould+Partners LLC, One Penn Plaza, Suite 3200, New York, NY 10119. 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.

Montieth & Company, 155 East 44th St., #1610, New York, NY 10017. 646/437-7602. montieth@montiethco.com; montiethco.com. Montieth Illingworth, CEO and Global Mng. Partner.



Stevens Group, The, 656 Post Ln., Somerset, NJ 08873. 732/748-8583; mobile: 917/514-7980. art@theartstevensgroup.com; rich@theartstevensgroup.com; www.theartstevensgroup.com. Art Stevens, Rich Jachetti, Marty Gamer, Mark Altschuler, Destiny Lopez, Nicole Stuhl.

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

Newsletters

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.

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

Newswires/Press Services

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.



SHOOT Publicity Wire, 2046 Treasure Coast Plaza, Ste. A-117, Vero Beach, FL 32960. 203/227-1699, ext. 3. publicitywire@shootonline.com; pr.SHOOTonline.com.

Press Release Distribution



24-7 Press Release Newswire, 203-901 West 3rd St., North Vancouver, BC V7P 3P9, Canada. 646/417-8294. www.24-7pressrelease.com. Philip Louie.

Launched in 2004, 24-7 Press Release Newswire is a leading press release distribution company offering affordable, effective press release distribution to businesses of all sizes looking to increase their online presence and awareness.

24-7 Press Release helps clients disseminate their news to online and traditional media, journalists, influencers and top search engines.

24-7 Press Release Newswire supports businesses in building brand awareness, increasing visibility on the web and enhancing exposure through social media.

Today, 24-7 Press Release Newswire has more than 30,000 clients and has distributed more than 500,000 news releases. The company is proud of reaching a milestone of 20 years in business along with a BBB A+ rating.

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

ExpertClick, 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.

JB Tyler Marketing & Consulting, LLC, 2121 TW Alexander Dr., Morrisville, NC 27560. glenna@jbtylerconsultants.com; www.jbtylerconsultants.com. Glenna Gonzalez, CEO.



PRESS RELEASE SERVICES FROM NEOTROPE®

Send2Press® Newswire, a service of **Neotrope®**, Temecula, CA USA. 310/373-4856. www.send2press.com. Christopher Simmons, CEO, member PRSA and ASCAP.

Affordable press release distribution and writing services since 1983. Placement in AP newsrooms, APnews website; Direct-to-Editors targeted email push to daily media and periodicals. Exclusive syndication via Neotrope News Network; data platforms including LexisNexis; online syndication on hundreds of news portals; Google News, and Apple News. No membership fees. Accredited staff. INC 5000 2009. Member BBB.

For our PR writing services, we provide a live phone interview with the actual public relations pro on staff composing your news, give you multiple drafts, and only 1-3 working days to complete your project. No long questionnaire to fill out. And we follow industry-standards including AP style.

Neotrope celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2023.

Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

See full listing under Crisis Management and Media Training.

Public Relations Networks

IPREX, 885 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, CO 80302. 720/345-3933. alexandra.mayhew@iprex.com; www.iprex.com. Alexandra Mayhew, Exec. Dir.



PR World Alliance, c/o Marcommit, Amaliaan 126E, 3743 KJ Baarn, The Netherlands. www.prworldalliance.com. Marianne van Barneveld, Chairman (The Netherlands), marianne@marcommit.nl; +31 (653) 372 153; Henry Feintuch,

Treasurer (U.S.), henry@feintuchpr.com; +1 212-808-4901; Christian Josephi, Board (Germany), c.josephi@panama-pr.de; +49 (163) 5800 599; Catherine Kable, Board (France), catherine.kable@kable-cf.com; +33 (1) 44 50 54 75; Anna Krajewska, Board (Poland), akrajewska@nbs.com.pl; +48 (22) 826 74 18.

PR World Alliance is an international network of premier independent communication consultancies. Partners are carefully selected and represent established, respected and accomplished firms with a solid reputation for producing superior results for clients.

The global network encompasses public relations companies and offices in North and South America, Europe and Asia. The network continues to seek new members in strategic locations.

PROI Worldwide, 125 S. Wacker Dr., Ste. 2600, Chicago, IL 60606. information@proi.com; www.proi.com. Jeff Altheide, Global Mng. Dir.

Public Relations Boutiques Int'l, www.prboutiques.com.

Worldcom Public Relations Group, 500 Fifth Ave., #1640, New York, NY 10110. 800/955-9675; 212/286-9550. toddlynch@worldcomgroup.com; www.worldcomgroup.com. Todd M. Lynch, Mng. Dir.

Public Service Announcements



INTELLIGENT COMMUNICATIONS

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. We are journalists, producers and directors, researchers, PR professionals and marketers aligned in our relentless pursuit of success 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.

Continues on next page

4MEDIA GROUP *continued*

Public service announcements (PSAs) deserve amplification to strengthen important awareness campaigns and public discourse. 4media group brings new life to PSAs through enhanced ideation and execution strategies. We work with nonprofit organizations to write, produce and distribute television and radio PSAs. Let 4media group help your team navigate appropriate pivots in narrative and/or characters to match your targeted audience.

4media group also offers: satellite media tours, radio media tours, surveys/market research, full media relations services, media buying, creative video production, podcast production, social media management and influencer marketing.



**America's Leading Public Service
Announcement Company**

Connect360 MultiMedia, New York/
Chicago/California. 212-624-9181.
sedelman@c360m.com; www.c360m.com.
Steven Edelman, President & CEO.

Connect360 is America's leading distributor of Public Service Announcements designed to reach targeted audiences for nonprofits, trade associations, and government agencies. There is a reason why more organizations entrust their campaigns to Connect360 than anyone else.

- Television / Radio
- Digital / Connected TV / Streaming Audio
- Out-of-Home
- And much more

In 2022, Nielsen found 1 in every 5 PSAs airing on broadcast television was for a campaign we distributed. To learn more, see our *Essential Guide to Broadcast PSA Success* and our Learning Center at www.c360m.com.

**Nonprofit Communications and
Marketing Specialists**

DEFINITION 6

DEFINITION 6, New York, NY. 678/358-0970. definition6.com/services/. Nikki Kunkle, Dir., Operations, PR Services.

DEFINITION 6 is a passionate group of creatives, writers, producers and media strategists. We create content that sparks engagement and drives measurable outcomes across platforms.

Our award-winning public service announcements deliver industry leading results for global organizations and grass roots non-profits. We concept, produce and distribute inspiring campaigns that increase awareness and drive action.

When you partner with us, we become an extension of your team with a commitment to understanding your brand's message, and a hands-on approach to connecting your story with consumers.

Lyons Broadcast PR, 10410 N. Kensington Pkwy., #305, Kensington, MD 20895. 301/942-1306. info@lyonspr.com; www.lyonspr.com. Dan Lyons.

See full listing under Satellite Media Tours.



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.



RADIO • TELEVISION • SOCIAL

Washington, DC • New York • Los Angeles

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

See full listing under SMTs and Radio

Radio

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.

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, New York, NY. 678/358-0970. definition6.com/services/. Nikki Kunkle, Dir., Operations, PR Services.

DEFINITION 6 is a passionate group of creatives, writers, producers, and media strategists. We create content that sparks engagement and drives measurable outcomes across platforms.

Through our innovative suite of broadcast and digital PR services, our media relations team builds custom media programs including satellite, virtual and on-site media tours, radio media tours, public service announcements and branded content distribution.

From global brands to innovative startups, our award-winning media tours deliver industry leading results in every market vertical. When you partner with us, we become an extension of your team with a commitment to understanding your brand's message, and a hands-on approach to connecting your story with consumers.



North American Network
www.nanradio.com

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
"no monkey business, just media results"

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

RADIO • TELEVISION • SOCIAL

Washington, DC • New York • Los Angeles

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 29th anniversary in 2024, 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 **earned** results. We make the booking process easy for you with a focus on quality and results.

Collectively, our team of media relations professionals and former journalists brings more than 250 years of broadcast experience and judgment to our clients, delivering tens of thousands of interviews throughout our company history with a strong commitment to excellence. Our team takes pride in delivering quality stories to our media partners, and therefore providing our clients with the best **earned** placements possible.

Strauss Media specializes in booking **television satellite media tours, radio tours, and virtual and in-person tours**, yielding placements on local stations, national broadcast and cable networks, network feeder services, syndicated programs and high-visibility digital platforms. Whether remote, in-person or at one of our studios across the country, we expertly manage every aspect of your broadcast outreach tours 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, ground tour or digital tour the most successful it can be.

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 have worked 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.**

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 to get your message on radio, television and online digital platforms and podcasts. **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
- GIS-Based Data Insights Mapping
- Audience Segmentation studies
- Brand-Impact-Focused Performance Measurement
- Bespoke insights solutions

OWL Research Partners, 8922 N. Kellogg St., B2-01, Portland, OR 97203. 503/348-9456. samara@owlresearchpartners.com; www.owlresearchpartners.com. Samara Omundson.



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 sur-

veys, 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.

Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

See full listing under Crisis Management and Media Training.



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.

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: 88% of Americans are watching TV 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 filming conditions and book a schedule of interviews that gets your message the media attention that it earns. Whether via a virtual, in-studio or remote broadcast media tour, 4media group can help your

spokespeople engage with your community in just the right place at just the right time.

4media group also offers: radio 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.



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, 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 company specializing in (all genres) of book publicity as well as food and lifestyle publicity. Our personal relationships with Producers throughout the country, ensure top tier bookings. Services include in-studio, zoom, or remote satellite TV junkets, Partner tours, and radio / podcast tours. We have worked with companies including Food Network/Discovery+, Sesame Street, Penguin Random House, Harper Collins, and The Wonderful Company.



D S Simon Media, 229 West 36th St., 9th flr., New York, NY 10018.

E: smt@dssimonmedia.com
T: 212-736-2727
dssimon.com

If you think you can't get your story on television during a presidential election year, think again! Our recent study presented at a major marketing conference found that TV news is devoting less than 10% of its newscast to political coverage. According to the National Association of Broadcasters, English-language local TV news has increased by 35%-40% and Spanish-language broadcasts have doubled.

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 health-care, travel, consumer goods, entertainment, technology, and retail as well as leading nonprofits and organizations. We are the only company in the industry to own its own studio and multiple broadcast control rooms.

Our satellite media tours guarantee 20-25+ bookings reaching more than 50 million people.

DEFINITION 6

DEFINITION 6, New York, NY. 678/358-0970. definition6.com/services/. Nikki Kunkle, Dir., Operations, PR Services.

DEFINITION 6 is a passionate group of creatives, writers, producers, and media strategists. We create content that sparks engagement and drives measurable outcomes across platforms.

Through our innovative suite of broadcast and digital PR services, our media relations team builds custom media programs including satellite, virtual and on-site media tours, radio media tours, public service announcements and branded content distribution.

From global brands to innovative startups, our award-winning media tours deliver industry leading results in every market vertical. When you partner with us, we become an extension of your team with a commitment to understanding your brand's message, and a hands-on approach to connecting your story with consumers.



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:

- Earned and Guaranteed Media Options
- Satellite, Internet and Radio Tours (Virtual, Studio or Remote)
- Customized Media Days/Junkets
- B-Roll & Sound Bites
- Co-op Alternatives
- Audio News Releases
- Matte Releases



Lyons Broadcast PR, 10410 N. Kensington Pkwy., #305, Kensington, MD 20895. 301/942-1306. info@lyonspr.com; www.lyonspr.com. Dan Lyons.

Lyons Broadcast PR offers turn-key Satellite Media Tour solutions. All across the country, we produce in-studio, on-location and virtual tours for wide variety of clients including top brands, non-profit organizations, trade associations and federal agencies.

Our expert Satellite Media Tour team offers full support throughout each SMT, from message development through final production.

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.



Pitching Monkeys Media, Waldwick, NJ 07643. 201/214-9611. mark@pitchingmonkeys.com; www.pitchingmonkeysmedia.com. Mark Ganguzza, President.

- Media Consultants - Planning / Strategizing
- Satellite Media Tours (SMT) - Studio / Virtual / On-Location
- Radio Media Tours (RMT)
- Media Training
- Podcasts - Stand-alone
- Audio News Releases (ANR)
- Public Service Announcements (PSA) - TV / Radio
- B-Roll and Video Production
- Full Production Services
- In-Studio Interviews
- English, Spanish and more



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 29th anniversary in 2024, 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 earned results. We make the booking process easy for you with a focus on quality and results.

Collectively, our team of media relations professionals and former journalists brings more than 250 years of broadcast

Continues on next page

STRAUSS MEDIA *continued*

experience and judgment to our clients, delivering tens of thousands of interviews throughout our company history with a strong commitment to excellence. Our team takes pride in delivering quality stories to our media partners, and therefore providing our clients with the best earned placements possible.

Strauss Media specializes in booking **television satellite media tours, radio tours, and virtual and in-person tours**, yielding placements on local stations, national broadcast and cable networks, network feeder services, syndicated programs and high-visibility digital platforms. Whether remote, in-person or at one of our studios across the country, we expertly manage every aspect of your broadcast outreach tours 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, ground tour or digital tour the most successful it can be.

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 have worked 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.**

Strauss Media Strategies delivers the absolute best results in the industry.

try. You'll enjoy working with our friendly staff of experienced public relations media professionals to get your message on radio, television and online digital platforms and podcasts. **Contact us today to discuss a customized solution for your next broadcast outreach campaign!**

Search Engine Optimization



Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

Also visit www.axiapr.com/autocomplete.



Monument Optimization, Washington, DC 20008. 202/904-5763. john.norton.stewart@gmail.com; www.monumentoptimization.com. John Stewart, Founder & CEO.

Monument Optimization advises clients on search engine marketing, web analytics, social media, email marketing, and online reputation management.

Since 2009 we've executed nearly 100 campaigns in a diverse range of sectors to generate new business, win elections, influence decision makers, fundraise, promote events, gain awareness, protect reputations, and improve communications.

We're proud of our impact.

Social Media



Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.



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@wearetierone.com; www.wearetierone.com. Kathy Wilson.

Speakers Service (Talent)

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

Capitol City Speakers Bureau, 6500 Carlisle Bend, Springfield, IL 62711, 217/544-8552. rita@capcityspeakers.com; www.capcityspeakers.com; www.speakersfornurses.com. Mike Klemm, Pres.



WORLD CLASS SPEAKERS & ENTERTAINERS

World Class Speakers & Entertainers, 5158 Clareton Drive, Ste. 1034, Agoura Hills (County of Los Angeles), CA 91376. 818/991-5400. jkessler@wcSpeakers.com; wcse@wcSpeakers.com; www.wcspeakers.com. Joseph I. Kessler, Pres.

Searching for a speaker or entertainer for your next live or virtual event?

World Class Speakers & Entertainers will enhance your next event by providing the appropriate speaker or entertainer to fit your program and budget requirements.

You can choose speakers who are experts in such fields as business, the

environment, technology, entertainment, sports, law, government, history, finance and much more.

Visit www.wcspeakers.com for further details on selecting a speaker for your next live or virtual event.

Special Events

Thunder11, 100 Crosby St., #301, New York, NY 10012. 212/362-1307. alyssa@thunder11.com; www.thunder11.com. Alyssa Meyer.

See full listing under Crisis Management and Media Training.

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

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).

Speechwriting

Axia Public Relations, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., #800, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-888-PR-FIRM-8 (1-888-773-4768). inbound@axiapr.com; www.axiapr.com. Jason Mudd.

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 broad-

cast 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
- www.facebook.com/murrayhillstudiosnyc

Strauss Media
STRATEGIES

RADIO • TELEVISION • SOCIAL

Washington, DC • New York • Los Angeles

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

See full listing under SMTs and Radio.

Video

Artisan Production House, 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.



Lyons Broadcast PR, 10410 N. Kensington Pkwy., #305, Kensington, MD 20895. 301/942-1306. info@lyonspr.com; www.lyonspr.com. Dan Lyons.

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

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

Lyons Broadcast PR, 10410 N. Kensington Pkwy., #305, Kensington, MD 20895. 301/942-1306. info@lyonspr.com; www.lyonspr.com. Dan Lyons.

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.

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.

DEFINITION 6

DEFINITION 6, New York, NY. 678/358-0970. definition6.com/services/. Nikki Kunkle, Dir., Operations, PR Services.

We are technologists who push brands to live out past the boundary of what's possible now and into the realm of where tech will take us tomorrow.

Our end-to-end technology consulting

and implementation services portfolio is geared to help organizations resolve their most pressing information technology challenges. We can help modernize your existing blueprint or build an optimized strategy to help you innovate at scale and speed.

Our services include:

Martech Strategy + Consulting

Web + App Development

Enterprise Solutions + Architecture

Customer Data Management

Digital Transformation + Optimization

Montieth & Company, 155 East 44th St., #1610, New York, NY 10017. 646/437-7602. montieth@montiethco.com; montiethco.com. Montieth Illingworth, CEO and Global Mng. Partner.

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

**Join PR's biggest online marketplace
for PR products & services—only \$25**

Name of Firm _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Website _____ E-mail _____

Staffers _____

Categories _____

For \$225 more, you can add to your listing 75 words describing the unique nature of your product or service and a color logo.

This enhanced listing also comes with a subscription to O'Dwyer's magazine (\$60 value).

75-word description (each additional 40 words is \$125) _____

**Need help? Contact Melissa Werbell, Director of Research, 646/843-2082 or melissa@odwyerpr.com
Form may be faxed to 212/683-2750**

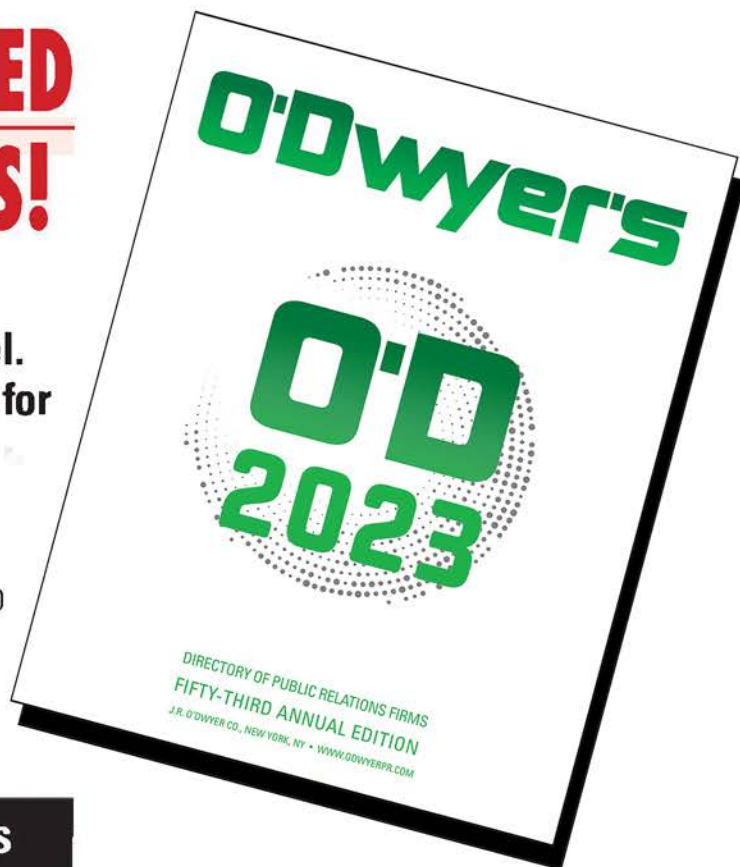
ORDER THE ONLY PRINTED DIRECTORY OF PR FIRMS!

O'Dwyer's is the #1 source for researching public relations firms and outside PR counsel. We've been connecting clients and PR firms for 53 years through our Directory of PR Firms.

You get quick access to large, medium-sized, and small PR firms and even experienced freelancers who work out of their homes. Whether you seek a long-term, worldwide relationship or need extra help on a project, **O'Dwyer's is the place to shop.**

Why O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms is so popular:

- ✓ **Has brought billions of dollars in business to PR firms.**
- ✓ *Authoritative industry rankings, based on CPA statements & tax returns.*
- ✓ *Firms ranked by 13 geographical regions in the U.S.*
- ✓ *Easy-to-use. PR firms sorted geographically and by 26 types of PR specialties. Firms listed alphabetically.*
- ✓ *Cross-Client Index: O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms is the only place you can look up a company & determine its outside counsel.*
- ✓ *Articles on how to find outside PR counsel, tips for owners on understanding agency valuation & the myths of being acquired, retirement planning, & the industry's renewed call for diversity.*
- ✓ *Leaders ranked in 19 specialized categories: agriculture, automotive/transportation, beauty/fashion/lifestyle, education, energy, entertainment/cultural, environmental/sustainability/greentech/PA, financial PR/IR, food & beverage, healthcare, home furnishings, industrial, non-profits, professional services, purpose/CSR, real estate finance & development, sports, technology, travel & economic development.*



“One of a kind resource for anyone involved in public relations—from clients to potential clients, from recent graduates to experienced practitioners—this is the directory to have close at hand.”

—Fraser Seitel, PR consultant, author & New York University adjunct professor

“The O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms is the most trusted resource for PR firm profiles and a platform for their brands. I have been a very satisfied user for my 33 years in PR.”

—Rick Gould, Gould+Partners

“Up-to-date, indispensable resource. Saves time and money. Every PR pro should have one.”

—Robert L. Dilenschneider, The Dilenschneider Group

“A phenomenal job-seeking aid.”

—Marie Raperto, CIMSearch

“The most comprehensive PR industry reference tool for clients and agencies. The gold standard in PR industry reference materials.”

—Henry P. Feintuch, Feintuch Communications

1-9

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
Adrian Awards: Awards
Advertising Club of New York: Associations
Advertising Specialty Institute: Associations
AJB Communications: Crisis Management
Alliance for Women in Media: Associations
Almanac of American Politics, The: Directories
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
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
At Point Inc.: Website Development
Atomik Research, a part of 4media group: Research
August: Crisis Management
AVA Digital Awards: Awards
Avaans Media: Crisis Management
Axia Public Relations: Broadcast Monitoring Services, Clipping Services, Crisis Management, Editorial Distribution & Services, Integrated Marketing & PR, Measurement & Evaluation, Media Monitoring, Media Training, Newswires/Press Services, Press Release Distribution, Search Engine Optimization, Social Media, Speakers Service (Talent), Speechwriting

B

Baruch College (CUNY), M.A. in Corporate Communication: Education
Bell Ringer Awards: Awards
BerlinRosen: Crisis Management
Big Apple Awards: Awards
Blaine Group, Inc., The: Crisis Management, Integrated Marketing & PR, Media Training
BoardroomPR: Crisis Management
Bospar: Crisis Management
Bowling Green State University, School of Media and Communication: Education
Brian Simon Associates: Executive Search
Bulldog PR Awards: Awards
Business Information Resources Directory: Directories

C

C Street Advisory Group: Crisis Management
Cameron Communications Inc.: Media Training
Cannes Lions Awards: Awards
Capitol City Speakers Bureau: Speakers Service (Talent)
Cavanaugh & Associates Inc.: Celebrities
Celebrity Access, Inc.: Celebrities
Clarion Awards: Awards
CLIO Awards: Awards
Cloudbreak Communications: Crisis Management
CMO Council: Associations
Collected Strategies: Crisis Management
Columbia University, M.S., Strategic Communication: Education
Communicator Awards: Awards
Communitas Awards: Awards
Complete Broadcasting Industry Guide, The: Television, Radio, Cable & Streaming: Directories
Connect360 MultiMedia: Public Service Announcements
Cornerstone Public Affairs: Crisis Management
CoverageBook: Clipping Services, Measurement & Evaluation
CPR, The International Institute For Conflict Prevention and Resolution: Associations
Crosswind Media and Public Relations: Crisis Management

D

Dragon Horse Agency: Crisis Management
D S Simon Media: Satellite Media Tours
DEFINITION 6: Media Tours/Roadshows, Public Service Announcements, Radio, Satellite Media Tours, Website Development
Dentons Global Advisors: Crisis Management
dotCOMM Awards: Awards
Drexel University: Education

E

Edelman: Crisis Management
ExpertClick: Press Release Distribution

F

Feintuch Communications: Crisis Management, Media Training
FGS Global: Crisis Management
Finn Partners: Crisis Management
FleishmanHillard: Crisis Management
Florida PR Association: Associations
French/West/Vaughan: Crisis Management
FTI Consulting Strategic Communications: Crisis Management

G

G&S Business Communications: Crisis Management
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 Quill Awards: Awards
Gold, Silver, Bronze Anvil Awards of Public Relations Society of America (PRSA): 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

H/Advisors Abernathy: Crisis Management
Headquarters USA Directory: Directories
Hechhoff Executive Search Inc.: Executive Search
Hermes Creative Awards: Awards
Hispanic Public Relations Association: Associations
Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association Int'l. (HSMIA): Associations
Hudson's Washington News Media Contacts Guide: Directories

I

iBravo! Awards: Awards
ICR: Crisis Management
Infinite Global: Crisis Management
Institute for Public Relations (IPR): 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
IPREX: Public Relations Networks

J

Jack Felton Medal for Lifetime Achievement: Awards
Jacobs Consulting & Executive Coaching: Executive Coaching
JB Tyler Marketing & Consulting, LLC: Press Release Distribution
Joele Frank: Crisis Management

K

KARV Communications: Crisis Management
KEF Media: Digital Media Tours, Satellite Media Tours
Kekst CNC: Crisis Management

L

LAG Strategy Corp: Crisis Management
Leadership Connect: Directories
Leidar: Crisis Management
Lyons Broadcast PR: Public Service Announcements, Satellite Media Tours, Video, Webcasting

M

MarCom Awards: Awards
Marketing Maven: Integrated Marketing & PR, Social Media
Marx Layne & Company: Crisis Management
Matrix Awards: Awards
Mercury Awards, Galaxy Awards, iNOVA Awards and More: Awards
MikeWorldWide: Crisis Management
Moldow Communications LLC: Satellite Media Tours
Monday Talent: Executive Search
Montieth & Company: Crisis Management, Integrated Marketing & PR, Media Training, Mergers & Acquisitions, Website Development
Monument Optimization: Search Engine Optimization
Murray Hill Studios: Satellite Media Tours, Television (TV) Production, Video, Virtual Meeting Solutions, Webcasting
Museum of Public Relations, The: Associations

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 (NYWIC): Associations
 Newman Group Inc., The: Media Tours/Roadshows, Media Training
 North American Network: Public Service Announcements, Radio
 Northeastern University College of Professional Studies, Online M.S., Corporate and Organizational Communication: Education
 Northwestern University, M.S., Integrated Marketing Comms.: Education
 NYU School of Professional Studies, Executive M.S. in Marketing and Strategic Comms.: Education

O

O'Dwyer's Directory of Public Relations Firms: Directories
 O'Dwyer's Public Relations Newsletter: Newsletters
 Online News Association: Associations
 OrangeFiery: Crisis Management
 Original U.S. Congress Handbook, The: Directories
 OWL Research Partners: Measurement & Evaluation, Media Monitoring, Research

P

Padilla: Crisis Management
 Page (Arthur W. Page Society): Associations
 Paragon Awards: Awards
 Pennsylvania Association for Government Relations: Associations
 Peppercomm, Inc.: Crisis Management
 Philadelphia PR Association: Associations
 Pitching Monkeys Media: Radio, Satellite Media Tours
 Power of Association Awards: Awards
 PR Club: Associations
 PR Council: Associations
 PR News Awards: Awards
 PR World Alliance: Public Relations Networks
 PROI Worldwide: Public Relations Networks
 Promotional Products Association Int'l.: Associations
 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 Policy Holding Company (PPHC): 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

Quinnipiac University, M.S. in Public Relations: Education

R

Radio Television Digital News Association: Associations
 Raglan's PR Daily Awards: Awards
 REBRAND 100 Global Awards: Awards
 Reevermark: Crisis Management
 Reputation Doctor® LLC: Crisis Management
 Researchscape International: Research
 Risa Heller Communications: Crisis Management
 ROKK Solutions: Crisis Management
 Rutgers University School of Communication and Information, Master of Communication and Media Program: Education

S

SABRE Awards: Awards
 Sachs Media: Crisis Management
 Scudder Training & Consulting, Ken: Media Training
 Send2Press® Newswire, a service of Neotrope®: Press Release Distribution
 Seton Hall University, M.A., Communication: Education
 She Runs It (Formerly Advertising Women of NY): Associations
 She Runs It Woman of the Year Award: Awards
 SHOOT Publicity Wire: Newswires/Press Services
 Sigma Delta Chi Awards: Awards
 SIIA CODiE Awards: Awards
 SIIA, Software & Information Industry Assn.: Associations
 Silver Apple Awards: Awards
 Simmons University, B.A., Communications: Education
 Sitrick And Company: Crisis Management
 SKDK: 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
 Strauss Media Strategies, Inc.: Electronic Newsfeeds/Satellite Services, Media Tours/Roadshows, Public Service Announcements,

Radio, Satellite Media Tours, Television (TV) Production
 Subject Matter+Kivvit: Crisis Management
 Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications: Education

T

Telly Awards, The: Awards
 The Levinson Group: Crisis Management
 The Stevie Awards: Awards
 Thunder11: Copywriters, Crisis Management, Media Lists, Media Tours/Roadshows, Media Training, Press Release Distribution, Research, Special Events
 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
 Trident DMG: 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

Vetted: Executive Search
 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
 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 (WRTH): Directories
 Worldcom Public Relations Group: Public Relations Networks

List your firm in PR's No. 1 online database

Clients who have a message to get across—and the communicators who can effectively tell their stories—have been relying on *O'Dwyer's* for the past 53 years. Our listings let the industry know who you are, what skills and services you offer, and which market sectors you focus on.

With a broad-based readership of industry pros, *O'Dwyer's* can raise your firm's profile with decision-makers across the communications industry—at a highly competitive price.

It could be the best money you ever spend on marketing.

J/PR

 **Ranked**

J/PR

530 7th Ave., #502, New York, NY 10018

212/924-3600

letstalk@jpublicrelations.com

www.jpublicrelations.com

Employees: 105. Founded: 2005.

Agency Statement:

A global communications agency with a specialization in public relations, social media, content creation, partnerships, and digital marketing. With 105 employees across four U.S. offices including New York City, San Diego, Los Angeles and Nashville, one international office in London, plus a presence in Toronto, Denver, Arizona, Boston, Chicago, and Florida, J/PR is a trusted leader in integrated media relations, social media and brand strategy, trend forecasting, guest programming, brand partnerships, experiential activations, influencer engagement, and crisis communications.

Established in 2005, J/PR has consistently risen as a leader in the travel and hospitality spaces. Today, the agency's growing



Jamie Sigler O'Grady & Sarah Evans

portfolio spans many markets outside of travel and hospitality, with clients in lifestyle, culinary, real estate, and wellness. J/PR's global roster includes more than 150+ hotels in the U.S., UK and throughout Europe, Mexico, the Caribbean, Africa and more. J/PR represents destinations such as Panama, North Carolina and Utah as well as flagship hospitality brands including Hilton Luxury Brands, Virgin Limited Edition, Shangri-La, Relais & Châteaux, Vail Hospitality, Pendry Hotels & Resorts, Under Canvas, and Iconic Luxury Hotels. Over the past few years, J/PR has continued to expand its consumer and real estate portfolio, with the addition of Hawaiian Airlines, California Olive Ranch, Palazzo Ricci, and more.

J/PR in the news with O'Dwyer's:

- News of Firms: J/PR Launches 20Two Studio

Wed., Dec. 1, 2021

... J/PR launches 20Two Studio, a creative storytelling affiliate focused on public relations and social media...

- News of Firms: J/PR Scoops Up Sadler & Co.

Mon., Nov. 8, 2021

... Emma Hartland-Mahon J/PR acquires luxury travel, hospitality and design PR agency Sadler & Co. The two agencies plan to...

- Accounts in Transit: J/PR Checks in at California Olive Ranch

Tue., Oct. 26, 2021

... J/PR is named agency of record for public relations and social media strategy

Personal
"newsroom"
contains
links to all
stories with
O'Dwyer's!



Submit online at odwpr.us/list-your-firm
or contact Melissa Werbel, Director of Research, 646/843-2082, melissa@odwyerpr.com



**JOB POSTING
PACKAGES**

**JOB FLASH™
EMAIL**

**BANNER
ADVERTISING**

**RESUME
BANK ACCESS**

O'DWYER'S CAREER CENTER

Is the premier electronic provider of career and talent management resources for marketing and PR professionals. Employers can connect to both active and passive job seekers who seek for new career opportunities.

EMPLOYER BENEFITS:

- **USER-FRIENDLY INTERFACE**
Quick and easy account registration and management with logo upload capabilities and detailed company profile.
- **EXCLUSIVE MEMBER BENEFIT**
O'Dwyer's members save 15% on certain job posting packages
- **JOB POSTING OPTIONS**
The O'Dwyer's Career Center offers a variety of job posting options including basic, enhanced and passive job seeker postings.
- **JOB FLASH™ EMAIL**
Email your job to thousands of communications industry pros with this special feature.
- **RESUME BANK**
The Resume Bank allows the ability to contact potential candidates, only paying for those who are interested.

Contact O'Dwyer's Career Center's customer service department at clientserv@communitybrands.com or Call (727) 497-6565 for more information.



Business Communications

A RESILIENT BRAND CAN'T JUST REACT TO CRISES, IT MUST PREPARE.

The key to successful management of any crisis is preparedness. We can help you protect your reputation across a wide range of issues and crises with:

RISK AUDITING + ASSESSMENT

**CRISIS PLANNING,
SIMULATION + MANAGEMENT**

**ISSUE TRACKING,
ANALYSIS + MONITORING**

Your reputation is a valuable asset. Protect it.

Learn more at

GSCommunications.com

