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O'Dwyer's

Communications & new media

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April: Broadcast & Social Media

May: PR Firm Rankings

June: Global & Multicultural

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Worldwide

Media deserves blame in sensationalistic news cycle

Let's be honest: the news in 2011 is a joke. Go to any popular news site today and you'd think you'd stumbled onto a YouTube knockoff. Sprinkled in with the occasional world event is a stream of slapstick videos, cheap celebrity gossip, obtuse punditry, sensationalistic sophistry and anecdotal half-assery from a network of information carnies who pedal visual snake-oil to a nation of media-sated babies.

The modern media is a museum of itself. It latches onto a story, extracts its own conversation and then promulgates its vestigial vagaries into national importance until the life has been beaten out of it. The media spent upwards of a month breaking, disseminating and pontificating on Rep. Anthony Weiner's no-sex scandal, dedicated countless hours to the release of Sarah Palin's emails, and has wasted months obsessing over its latest "trial of the century" (paradoxically, we seem to get one every year) with Casey Anthony. In the midst of all this is a noticeable dearth of national or world events that actually matter (you know, the news). The news in 2011 is a footnote, a happenstance, an afterthought. Networks create the conversation; they decide what issue is worth following.

The adage used to be that our news was run on fear. While I'd argue this is still the case for much of the local nightly news cycle, the national networks serve the role of virtual pacifiers, anesthetizing the masses with a stream of soporific, sugar-coated patter and sanguine slices-of-life stories delivered with the mindless aplomb of a Lifetime movie. Jon Stewart got it right during his well-publicized June spat with Fox News' Chris Wallace when he said the real bias of the media "is towards laziness, conflict, and sensationalism." The fourth estate has decided its direct competition is now gossip blogs, teenybopper rags and social media sites. Call it what you want. It isn't news.

Don't believe me? I picked a random day in late June and scrolled through the top headlines on several of the most popular news sites on the web. Below is a brief sampling of what I found:

CNN was the worst. Their website in particular has practically become the McDonald's of news. Among the headlines in the "top stories" section of the site: "Lindsay Lohan stands up Matt Lauer," "51-year-old Lost actor weds 16-year-old," and "Setback for Anna Nicole Smith estate dispute." These are just CNN's most popular stories. Look immediately below in the website's "features" section and you'll find these enlightening gems: "Are Pippa and Harry dating?" "The 25 best animated films," "Tom Hanks tells fans to make a baby," "Creator of fried Kool-Aid tells all," and "Does life online give you 'popcorn brain'?" (yes, it does).

The headlines weren't much better on TIME.com. "It is okay to eat while texting?" was the top news story, followed by "The pleasures of cooking while drunk with Hannah Hart," and "Can city living warp your Brain?"

Just several of the top stories on ABC.com were "Lohan skirts jail, can drink again," "Jesus resurrected ... in a lawn chair," and "Bedpans to riches ... heiress' nurse gets \$34 million."

Even supposedly "high-brow" sites like Huffington Post don't fare much better. Some of their top stories were "7 sites you should be wasting time on right now," "Surprising reasons why writers should keep their day jobs," and "How January Jones' pregnancy will impact 'Mad Men.'"

I guess you could argue it was a bad news day. I'll admit, it'd be one thing if these stories were buried at the bottom of the page with sports items and weather reports — but these were top headlines, in spots once reserved for late-breaking news. In many cases they beat out other actual news stories happening that day, such as President Obama's announced troop withdrawal plan for Afghanistan, and updates on the New York Senate's then-undecided vote on gay marriage. In some cases these two items didn't appear at all.

I also understand that we live in a 24-hour news cycle. The beast needs to be fed; we need pundits to fill out the news cycle. But isn't it the media's responsibility to prioritize for the sake of its own integrity, to take a stand internally? What ever happened to the 'inverted pyramid' model of journalism, and why doesn't it apply here? What happened to veracity, verisimilitude, professionalism, or just pride in your craft? ♦

— Jon Gingerich

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Facebook to take number-one spot for online display ads

By Jon Gingerich

Facebook will soon earn more revenues in display advertising than any other website, according to a June report by market research company eMarketer.

The world's most popular social networking site is estimated to bring in as much as \$2.2 billion in display ads by the end of this year, effectively displacing Yahoo Inc.'s former spot as the number-one bread winner for display advertising revenues.

Already, Facebook beat Yahoo and Microsoft in online display ads during 2011's first quarter. Total display ad impressions for Facebook during that period were more than 345 billion, according to comScore, which is more than double its impressions during the same time in 2010. Facebook is now expected to comprise nearly 18% of the overall market for display ads that appear online, an increase of more than 5% from Facebook's online ad share in 2010.

According to the recent eMarketer report, Facebook is expected to earn about \$4 billion in total advertising rev-

enue by the end of the 2011, which is more than double the \$1.86 billion it raked in the year before. Facebook's anticipated \$2.2 billion in display ads — which includes banner ads, video ads and page sponsorships — have doubled each year for the past two years.

Display ad growth abounds online

The eMarketer report said Yahoo can also expect growth in its online display capacity. The search site should see of surge in display ads by nearly 14% this year. Google's display ad revenues will total \$1.15 billion in the U.S. in 2011, up 34% from 2010.

The news couldn't come at a better time for Facebook. The company is rumored to be prepping for an initial public offering sometime later this year, which is expected to be met with investor fanfare. CNBC in June reported an IPO could value the site at more than \$100 billion. The company moved from its long-time Palo Alto headquarters to near-by Menlo Park in June.

Facebook currently has nearly 650 million users. In May alone, Quantcast estimated Facebook took in approximately 140 million unique U.S. visitors. The last

two years in particular have been an era of immense growth for the company, with overall site activity increasing about 40% between 2010 and 2011.

The overall confidence advertisers have in running successful display ad campaigns on the site, however, shows another side to the story.

Until last year, Microsoft was the exclusive seller of display advertising on Facebook. Facebook's display ad sales have picked up since ending its arrangement with Microsoft, but display ads are typically a mixed bag on social networking sites, where click-through rates are notoriously lower than in search engines or on "traditional" websites. Facebook's average click-through rates for display advertisements, for example, are about a fifth of what occurs on other top websites. Even today, MySpace's average click-through rates for display advertisements still manage to surpass that of Facebook's. Experts have cited Facebook's younger audience, users who are quicker to ignore display ads, to more technologically savvy users who employ ad blocking software, as possible reasons for the lack of clicks. ●

Gannett to resume layoffs, cutting 700 more newspaper jobs

By Jon Gingerich

Virginia-based newspaper giant Gannett Co. announced June 21 that it would be laying off 700 employees from the company's newspaper division, or about 2% of its workforce. The cuts will affect virtually all of

Gannett's 82 U.S. newspapers.

The layoffs are the company's largest since July 2009, when Gannett's U.S. newspaper division slashed nearly 1,500 jobs. It's the fourth such layoff since the summer of 2008.

News of the layoffs comes after Gannett Co. introduced several austerity measures to cut costs. Many newspaper employees took a week-long unpaid furlough during the second quarter of 2011, and practically every Gannett employee was forced to take a similar furlough during the first quarter.

In a June 21 memo distributed to more than 20,000 company employees, Gannett U.S. Newspapers Division President Bob Dickey explained the layoffs as the result of current economic conditions.

"National advertising remains soft and with many of our local advertisers reducing their overall budgets, we need to take further steps to align our costs with the current revenue trends," Dickey wrote.

Gannett Co., which publishes *USA Today* and dozens of local newspapers around the country such as *The*

Indianapolis Star, *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, *The Tennessean* and *The Des Moines Register*, employed nearly 33,000 workers as of 2010. The company's U.S. newspaper division comprises about 65% of its employees.

Earnings at Gannett have fallen consistently in recent years. First quarter earnings for 2011 revealed revenues for the company's publishing units fell 6.2%, to \$930 million. Advertising revenue similarly dropped 7.3%, to \$602 million. The company's television revenues fell \$3 million to \$158 million. Overall, the company's net income dropped by 23%, to \$91 million. It was \$117 million during the same period in 2010.

Gannett Co. came under fire earlier this year when a *New York Times* story reported that Gannett Chairman, President and CEO Craig Dubow received an estimated annual salary of \$9.4 million in 2010, which was almost twice what he earned in 2009. It was also discovered that Dubow had received a \$1.25 million cash bonus, based in part on his success in reducing company costs through layoffs. ●

Media News Briefs

ABRAMSON SUCCEEDS KELLER AT NYT

Jill Abramson, Managing Editor and former Washington Bureau Chief at the *New York Times*, is taking the Executive Editor job of Bill Keller on Sept. 6.

Keller, 62, who ran the NYT's newsroom for the last eight years, will become a full-time writer for the *New York Times Magazine* as well as the paper's news and opinion page.

Arthur Sulzberger, Publisher of the NYT, accepted Keller's decision to step down with "mixed emotions." Abramson, 57, called her new post a "dream job for any journalist." She joined the NYT in 1997 from the *Wall Street Journal*, where she was deputy D.C. bureau chief. Earlier she edited *Legal Times*.

FCC cites recent decline in VNRs

Video news release use in newsrooms has waned in the wake of FCC fines and a damaging report in 2006 by a PR watchdog, the FCC said in a lengthy report on the state of the media.

By Greg Hazley

Video news releases, for decades a staple of the PR repertoire, are used less and more carefully by newsrooms in the wake of Federal Communications Commission fines and a damaging report in 2006 by a PR watchdog, the FCC said in a lengthy report on the state of the media June 9.

Brian Schwartz, former Director of Client Solutions for Synaptic Digital, told the FCC in an interview last fall that his company, the former Medialink, does not use the term “video news release” much any more but that the content is still used because it is free and TV news resources are limited. Schwartz left Synaptic in November.

Doug Simon, President of New York-based D S Simon Productions, told the FCC that VNRs have become irrelevant in the wake of third-party video and the “near-death experience” of TV news. “VNRs aren’t a relevant communications tool anymore,” he told the FCC via email. “I don’t have anything else to add.”

Simon’s firm produced a VNR spot that the FCC said was misused by a Minneapolis Fox affiliate in 2006 and led to a fine earlier this year.

Former Hearst VP Fred Young told the FCC that that proper use of VNRs with identification is acceptable for news

rooms. “Today if you clearly identify where [the VNR] came from, I have no problem with it,” he told the FCC. “It is the people who are taking it and passing it off as news that bothers me.”

Kevin Benz, News Director for News 8 Austin, said the station uses VNRs from the state that are related to outdoor activities, but they are fully vetted and the source is identified on air and online. “If there is something that we feel is overly promotional, or only promotional, we don’t air it,” he said.

Others are more wary.

Steve Schwaib, Director of News and Digital Content for an Atlanta CBS affiliate, said the station does not use VNRs unless there is a drug recall and it’s the only video available. “But we do not take VNR handouts, period,” he said.

Hearst’s current guidelines call for identifying VNR video used, but its stations do not use VNRs “as a whole,”

according to the FCC report. A news director for FOX 13 Salt Lake City said the station burns “courtesy of” into the videotape before it’s even reviewed to prevent VNR footage from being used as B-roll for another story without attribution.

The FCC notes that some argue that enforcement actions against VNRs violate First Amendment rights. FOX has a case pending in defense of its VNR usage arguing that it did not violate sponsorship ID rules because it was not paid to air the VNR content. The News Corp. property also says the FCC encroached on its “discretion in making editorial choices.”

The FCC also detailed examples of “pay-for-play” arrangements between advertisers and local TV news stations, adding that stations that disclose VNR sources often fail to do so in reports posted to their websites. The commission even suggested the creation of a “unified online public file” which would serve as a searchable record for which stations use sponsorship arrangements.

Another notable PR reference in the FCC report is the statistic that 12.4 percent of 251 TV news directors said they are already doing or considering doing product placements within newscasts. ●

Media News Briefs

McGraw-Hill PUTS TV STATIONS ON BLOCK

McGraw-Hill Cos. has hired Morgan Stanley to sell its \$100M broadcast business as the company decides to focus on its information services and educational units.

The stations include ABC affiliates in Denver, San Diego, Bakersfield and Indianapolis and Azteca America aligned properties in Denver, Fort Collins, Colorado Springs, San Diego and Bakersfield.

The broadcast unit reported an 18 percent boost in revenues last year and stands poised to gain from a surge in political advertising tied to next year’s election.

McGraw-Hill is pitching the units as stations in “desirable markets that should be attractive to strategic and financial buyers with a focus on media.”

CEO Terry McGraw II, expects the divestiture will demonstrate that the owner of Standard & Poor’s, J.D. Power & Assocs. and Platts energy information services is “committed to driving superior shareholder value by focusing on high growth global brands and businesses.”



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Annual 'Pow Wow' fights to strengthen U.S. travel brand

The 43rd annual U.S. Travel Association's International Pow Wow — the biggest travel industry event promoting travel to the United States — convened May 21-25 in San Francisco, bringing together more than 450 journalists and thousands of PR professionals, industry experts and travel organizations from all over the world to tout "Brand U.S.A."

By Carla Marie Rupp

According to Steve P. Joyce, President & CEO of Choice Hotels International and National Chair of the U.S. Travel Association, this year's event was "one of the best-attended in the past 10 years." Joyce said the relationships formed and renewed here are "the bedrock of a \$134 billion industry," the average amount of revenue generated by international visitors to the United States each year.

The event gathered more than 5,500 registered participants. Pre-scheduled business appointments numbered more than 70,000. Professionals from more than 1,000 travel organizations and 1,500 travel buyers from 70 countries mingled at the multi-faceted conference's numerous functions.

The U.S. Travel Association officials estimate that about \$3 billion of travel business should come out of the contacts brought together at this year's Pow Wow. This was the second time that the international Pow Wow was held in San Francisco.

The fight to save U.S. tourism

The United States had lost travel market share to other destinations in recent years. *U.S. Travel* reported that while the country welcomed nearly 60 million inbound travelers in 2010 — including more than 26 million from overseas countries — its share of global long-haul arrivals had fallen significantly.

"America's lack of a national travel promotion program contributed to the decline," reported Mike Milligan in the *PowWow Daily*, May 23.

Now all this is expected to change for the better. Headway has been made to strengthen the United States as a travel destination. The Corporation for Travel Promotion, America's first national program to attract international travel, was established by Congress under the Travel Promotion Act signed into law in March 2010. It is the first-ever nationally coordinated, non-profit public-private partnership program with the mission of promoting increased international travel to the U.S. This includes foreign leisure, business and scholarly travel and maximizing the economic and social benefits

of that travel for communities all over the U.S.

Virtually every sector of the U.S. economy will benefit from the CTP, resulting from work carried out after recent conferences of International Pow Wow (IPW) and the U.S. Travel Association, reports a fact sheet about CTP released by the High Lantern Group.

The average overseas visitor to America spends \$4,000 on hotels, restaurants, retail and other local business, reports the U.S. Travel Association, based on Department of Commerce data. CTP is charged with identifying and addressing perceptions regarding entry policies to the U.S.; and maximizing the economic benefits of travel. In 2010, international travel to the United States generated a trade surplus of \$32 billion and supported 1.2 million jobs.

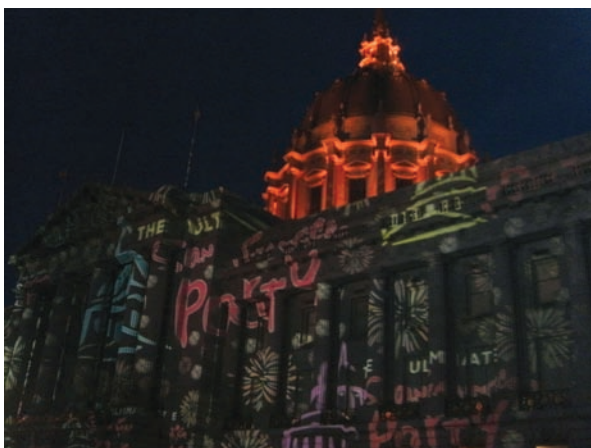
James P. Evans in mid-May was named as the first Chief Executive Officer of the CTP. Evans, an acknowledged leader in global hospitality and former CEO of Jenny Craig and Best Western International, told the Pow Wow audience at the hugely-attended May 23 luncheon that the travel industry would play a key role in the success of the CTP.

"We'll be good partners. We'll be great listeners and we'll ask you for your ideas," Evans said.

According to Evans, attracting more international visitors to the U.S. benefits the industry and our country by creating jobs, growing



Continued on next page



All photos by Carla Marie Rupp.

exports and spurring economic growth.

CTP Chairman Stephen J. Cloobek, who is Chairman and CEO of Diamond Resorts International, calls CTP's new leadership "a game changer."

"For the first time in the history of the United States, we're actually going to market and brand 'Team USA.'"

A travel writer's dream

San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee welcomed Pow Wow attendees, saying "tourism is the number-one (money) generator in San Francisco." Journalists attended the Pow Wow from as far away as Australia, Egypt, Thailand, Italy, Germany and Ecuador.

"Pow Wow is a window to the world," said Robert Arends, Public Relations Manager, San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau. "It gives our PR team a chance to meet international journalists in an interactive face-to-face setting. We're able to target San Diego stories to some of our biggest global markets, including the U.K., Canada, Germany and Australia, plus big emerging markets like China."

Travel proved to be an even bigger bonanza for media and PR pros this year, according to Roger Dow, President and CEO, U.S. Travel Association.

"It's the best organized travel show I know of in the world. You meet all the suppliers and destinations in the U.S. And San Francisco is a lovely city!" exclaimed Nils Norberg, CEO, *RES Travel Magazine*, Stockholm, Sweden.

Both prior and during the five-day event, journalists were able to mingle with communicators as well as schedule appointments with PR contacts. Plenty of PR networking with media and buyers occurred on a variety of interesting tours in San Francisco and throughout the region of California.

A Sunday press brunch at the Ferry Building brought media delegates together for a preview of the week while mingling and trying a large sampling of food from San Francisco's restaurants.

Tours and outings included complimentary trips to beautiful San Mateo County, Sonoma County and Napa Valley vineyards, Segway tours with the Electric Tour Company, musical heritage tours using the Magic Bus to visit Haight-Ashbury and the Fillmore District, party boat tours to Alcatraz and a tour that took guests under the famed Golden Gate Bridge.

"Pow Wow did a great choice on the selected places we could visit in San Francisco. It's a really amazing city," said Maria Belen Tinajero, delegate from Solo Turismo, Ecuador.

Producer Jeffrey Lehmann, Del Mar,

CA, host of PBS' Weekly Explorer Travel Series said, "The amazing thing about Pow Wow is that it brings all the movers and shakers in travel together for one week. It showcases a different city each year and you learn so much each time — even though I've been there before!"

Press conferences, a required event for official media attending Pow Wow, included lively events with news for the journalists from Universal Theme Parks in Orlando and in Hollywood, reports from Greater Orlando (last year's Host City), Disney Destinations and SeaWorld Parks, presentations from NYC & Company, the 2011 Host City San Francisco, as well as tips from the Los Angeles CVB's LA Inc. and the latest from Los Angeles World Airports, the California Travel and Tourism Commission and Cirque du Soleil. Breaking news from the U.S. Travel Association and the Corporation for Travel Promotion (CTP) also filled out the busy day for reporters.

The presence of the media gathering news tips and information and stories at these events and others — lavish gala parties at City Hall, Pier 39, Alcatraz, and at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park — provided plenty of PR networking opportunities for tourism pros. Hundreds of PR professionals networked with international and U.S. freelance and staff journalists eager for story ideas for their publications and broadcast outlets.

San Francisco went all out in creating fun networking. Even after journalists' busy day at Tuesday press conferences, the press were able to mingle with publicists and the rest of the 5,000+ delegates at the "Culture Club," party, sipping cocktails and California wines, savoring international cuisine, enjoying music and unique entertainment — all while exchanging business cards.

At the extravagant night at historic City Hall, a large ferris wheel was set up for rides. The colorful, vibrant flavor of San Francisco filled the evening, with jugglers, stilt-walkers, R&B singers, dancing, seafood and other tastes of the city — set to the backdrop of a psychedelic light show on the face of City Hall itself.

During a specially-guided tour of Alcatraz, visitors heard from former prison guards Frank Heaney and George Divencenzi, as well as a former inmate-turned-author, Bob Luke, now in his 80s.

PR professionals brought writers together at a client function at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco; at the Hyatt at

Continued on page 19

New tactics, new media to cure the travel doldrums

Travelers have declined, competition is fierce and resources are down. How can travel destinations continue to grow in this environment, and how can PR continue to provide a positive ROI? The key to success is breaking away from business as usual.

By Lauren Reed

It seems a mandate of the times for marketing and communications directors to motivate more consumers using fewer resources. All the while, the pool of consumers spending money is significantly smaller than it was not so long ago. Throw in the decline in travel writers and the struggling newspaper industry, and the tourism industry is presented with a monumental set of challenges.

While a sluggish economy might eliminate competition in other industries, destinations don't disappear. A beach or a mountain doesn't sell off, pack it up and move to where the work is. It doesn't reinvent itself in a new market.

A "traditional" destination PR tactic may have included inviting travel writers to visit on press tours and taking that experience back to their readers and viewers. Unfortunately, many outlets do not allow their reporters to go on complimentary press tours. They run into budget restrictions, scheduling conflicts or decline because they are looking for a more individualized experience. If a destination's entire PR budget is spent on press tours, opportunities with many popular feeder market outlets will be missed.

Bring the destination to life

Tourism in the City of Gatlinburg, Tennessee, is up 12% from last year. Gatlinburg, located in the heart of the Smoky Mountains, is the ideal destination for adventure and outdoor activities. From December through March, Ober Gatlinburg, Tennessee's only ski resort, comes alive as visitors flock to the slopes for skiing, snowboarding, tubing and ice skating. The mountain destination has continued to grow visitors in an otherwise rocky economic environment.

How? For one, leadership made a commitment to step outside of their comfort zone and implement new tactics. Namely, Gatlinburg made it snow in the South during October and November, bBringing a series of events that delivered a true taste of a Gatlinburg winter vacation directly to audiences in three key feeder cities: Atlanta, Nashville and Birmingham.

To create snow, the city of Gatlinburg

worked with an ice-delivery company that also had a large snow slide. The company took trucks loaded with 300-pound blocks of ice to these cities and, after arriving, fed these blocks into a trailer with an industrial strength blower that chipped the ice into snow. The snow was then blown through a large hose onto the snow slide and surrounding areas. Since it was very warm during the events, materials

such as plywood was used to insulate the snow from the ground, keeping it cooler so attendees could enjoy the snow longer.

The events, held in high foot-traffic locations in Atlanta, Nashville and Birmingham, featured a manmade snow hill for guests to speed down on tubes, a ski demonstration and Gatlinburg treats like fudge, mountain taffy and hot chocolate, as well as prizes like VIP vacations.

Attendees were given handbills directing them to a website with event-specific discounts to lodging, attractions and restaurants, and personal information that can be used in future marketing efforts was collected on-site using contest registration forms. Getting directly in front of its audience at the events allowed Gatlinburg to control messages and receive immediate feedback, and the visual of snow tubing in eighty degree weather resulted in mainstream media coverage.

These events delivered a Gatlinburg experience that the best written article could never deliver, and the multiple media hooks resulted in region-wide pre- and post-event coverage with each stop.

Make it easy for reporters

For those reporters that cannot attend press tours, consider taking your destination to their newsroom. Gatlinburg conducted face-to-face desk-side brief-



The scenic aerial tramway in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, takes passengers on a two-mile trek from the Ober Gatlinburg ski resort to downtown Gatlinburg, home of a variety of dining options and rustic-style stores reminiscent of old-style villages.

gs with travel editors, bloggers and reporters in key feeder markets. It took no more than 30 minutes out of a reporter's busy day and gave us the opportunity to leave behind a press basket with little pieces of Gatlinburg and press materials with new story angles, unique packages, Gatlinburg-specific news and upcoming events. It is important to know the reporter's audience and to provide materials customized to each outlet. While your destinations may have a lot to offer, be sure to create pitches and story ideas that most effectively engage their readers. A mommy-blogger most likely isn't interested in the same topics as the local newspaper reporter that is a known adventurer. Most importantly, these introductions established mutually-beneficial relationships with reporters. Knowing that a PR contact was there to provide information in a timely manner encouraged reporters to consider covering Gatlinburg.

Utilize PR in advertising markets

The Gatlinburg event in Atlanta was a great example of how PR can provide a cost-effective solution to reaching a feeder market. A destination's marketing dollars can be spread across several states in the form of advertising, earned media, collateral materials distribution, conducting contests and social net-

Continued on next page

working. It can be a struggle to decide how to allocate dollars over several feeder markets, especially when targeting a large city like Atlanta where advertising is expensive relative to other markets. While the cost of advertising varies from city to city, PR efforts generally require a similar amount of resources across markets — especially if you have an established PR presence in multiple markets. Gatlinburg utilized Peritus staff in our Birmingham and Nashville offices to cut down on travel expenses and leverage local media knowledge and relationships.

Set benchmarks, measure success

While everything you do in tourism marketing should drive more visitors, having overall tourism up or down a few percentage points is not the only way to measure success. Gatlinburg set specific goals prior to each event with criteria that defined what a successful event would be including number of handouts distributed, attendees, award registrants, partner organization involvement, social media activity and media impressions. In addition to the

number of media impressions, the quality of the coverage was measured. Did it include images? Was the article prominently placed? Did the article convey your key messages? How many people took action as a result? Was this measured by reviewing Web visits to an event-specific page?

Not only is Gatlinburg's overall tourism up 12%, print, radio, TV and Web media coverage of the three events was valued at more than six times the budget, more than 2,500 people attended and received information about Gatlinburg and its attractions and millions of media impressions reached an even larger audience.

In short, a story in print or on television can show an audience what your destination has to offer but by bringing aspects of your destination to them, you give them a hands-on, lasting experi-



Residents in southern U.S. cities such as Atlanta found themselves participating in the unlikely summer activity of 'tubing,' after the city of Gatlinburg decided to spread its message by taking the snow to them.

ence that entices them to actually visit. The world of media is evolving and the public relations field and tourism marketers have to follow suit. It's time to think of creative ways to not only reach your audience, but encourage them to act and leave a lasting impression on them.

Lauren Reed, APR, is Senior Director at Peritus in Nashville. ●

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Travel PR demands a marketing mindset

A new media landscape has blurred the roles and boundaries of marketing and PR, with interactive technologies presenting a series of new advantages to professionals working in today's travel environment.

By Peggy Bendel

After many years in travel and tourism public relations, I'm bemused by the fact that so many PR professionals, both newly-minted and long-seasoned, still draw a clear distinction between "public relations" and "marketing."

This is an era of great opportunity for PR. With so many exciting new technologies and tactics emerging, and the potential to stretch skill sets into such arenas as constantly-evolving social media, hyper-local news sites and flash sales, I'd like to see more of my travel PR peers identify themselves as marketers, too.

A shrinking divide

Why should travel PR play more of a marketing role? Just in the past 24 hours, the following items appeared in my inbox:

Ad agencies' domination of the PR Lions (awarded in Cannes) this year means the PR industry need to "wake up" and "integrate with other disciplines," according to the category's jury. David Senay, PR Lions jury President and Chief Executive of Fleishman-Hillard, said that when it came to marketing themselves for awards, ad agencies were "better at packaging" than PR companies, which still have a lot to learn.

A report from *Forbes* Insights, "Bringing 20/20 Foresight to Marketing," asks: given the continued emergence of disruptive marketing technologies, how can companies stay abreast, much less ahead, of where consumers will interact with their brands? Marketers today need to view the customer with 20/20 foresight, but are caught in hindsight by focusing on what's worked in the past, not what is working in the present or will work in the future. The survey — whose respondents included travel and hospitality executives — asked about budgeting in 2012 as well. Over the next year, 56% of respondents said they will increase their online marketing spend, 54% will increase their social media spend,

and 50% will increase their mobile marketing spend.

Each of the areas targeted for budget expansion represent opportunities for PR practitioners who embrace these emerging technologies, all of which are predicted to continue growing in importance as the ways consumers research information and increasingly, purchase travel. And that increased spending means less spent on other tactics, possibly including activities traditionally housed within the PR budget.

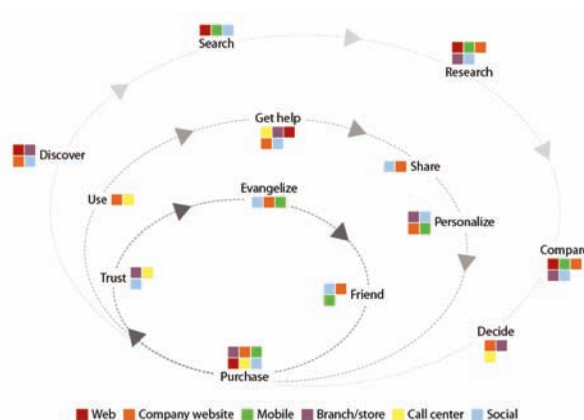
Ideal conditions for interaction

Let's examine just some prominent trends in travel, to see where current opportunities for growth are evident.

According to the Office of Travel and Tourism, International visitors have spent an estimated \$48.3 billion on U.S. travel and tourism-related goods and services year to date (January through April), an increase of 13% compared to the same period in 2010. The U.S. travel and tourism industry is on pace for a record-setting year. According to experts, international visitors could inject more than \$151 billion into the U.S. economy in 2011 if these trends continue.

Given the weak dollar, the United States is a bargain now for travelers from around the globe, and likely to remain so for some time. Do you know from which countries travelers are visiting your state/city/property/attraction? Do you know what they are looking for in a vacation? Can you tweet or post on your facebook page in that language, to make potential visitors feel even more comfortable? What about a simple "Welcome" card or leaflet in appropriate languages for your hotel or visitors' center, or a translation for restaurant menu or spa services?

New technologies and tactics — from Twitter and Facebook to Foursquare, Gowalla, TripIt and others that have undoubtedly emerged as I write this! — provide swift, inexpensive methods for reaching or servicing targeted markets, while adding to our often-overwhelming



This graphic illustrates PR's opportunities to integrate with travelers at numerous points in the sales and marketing process. According to Henry Hartevelde's presentation at the 2011 ATME Conference, today's companies must now effectively engage with travelers across a growing "vortex" of touch-points through which consumers are constantly-connected.

Source: Forrester Research. June 2011. Used with permission.

"to do" lists. But this is not the time — if there ever was such a time — to say "not my job."

As the definition of "media relations" shifts — and the long-standing tactics of press releases, media events, fam tours and pitches morph with the adoption of social media, the shrinkage of the traditional media corps, the expansion of citizen journalism and the proliferation of smart phones making everyone a potential iReporter — PR professionals have an unprecedented chance to redefine themselves and their firms as essential guides for their clients through this new reality.

Embracing the 'marketing mindset'

That notion was particularly clear when I recently attended two travel industry conferences back-to-back this June: the PRSA Travel & Tourism Section/SATW Associates Council in San Antonio, which drew some 250 enthusiastic PR and communications practitioners, and three days later, the Association of Travel Marketing Executives in Boston, where there were exactly four public relations executives in a total attendance of 150.

It's not hard to see why the PRSA/SATW Conference — a long-standing annual event that's on the radar screens for many of us — drew so many travel PR practitioners. There was great programming that focused on everything from web analytics to pitching a variety

Continued on next page

of niche media, networking opportunities with peers and media. But the programming was equally strong at ATME, with top executives from Google, Rand McNally, the Knot and more.

To quote Henry Harteveldt, Vice President and Principal Analyst at Forrester Research and the newly-elected Chairman of ATME, who gave the keynote presentation at this year's ATME Conference, "The lines are blurring within what we collectively call 'marketing.' PR is marketing, eCommerce is marketing, social is marketing. And at the same time, PR is related to eCommerce and advertising is related to social."

Harteveldt's presentation, titled "Agile Marketing in Dynamic Times," outlined many macro-trends that impact travel patterns — essential information for travel PR practitioners — as well as those in other marketing disciplines.

Among Forrester's findings:

Basic types of trips are more popular with active/adventure travel and VFR growing, while 4-7 day trips, 8+day vacations and even weekend getaways are dropping, comparing Q1 2011 to Q1 2008.

Nearly four in five U.S. online travelers now also use social media.

Social commerce is beginning to emerge, with airlines, tour operators and hotels now offering the opportunity to purchase travel on Facebook, for example.

Online travel has no borders, with the global online population expanding rapidly, particularly in Asia/Pacific/Oceania, which Forrester forecasts will comprise 44% of the global online population by 2014, up from 39% in 2009. North America and Europe, while growing numerically, will drop from 16% and 26% of the global online population to 13% and 22%, respectively.

Particularly germane to public relations professionals, the "splinternet" adds complexity to marketing and eCommerce, with users connecting via multiple devices, as smart phones and tablets steal online time from laptops and desktops. Social online experiences, from TripAdvisor to AfarConnect, encourage travelers to connect with their similarly-minded peers, reinforcing that "people like me" continue to be the most trusted source of information.

Harteveldt noted that marketers must craft "story arcs" to benefit from the multiple events and micro-journeys within a person's trip, beginning with planning ("Join our online community to

discuss with peers!"), and through purchase ("Would you like to upgrade?"), departure ("Would you like any extra amenities?"), trip ("Need dinner reservations?"), return ("Please share your comments with our online community, and on Facebook") and next trip ("Download our mobile app to get the best deal on your next trip").

Many of these touch-points and trends provide opportunity for innovative PR practitioners, and the firms that employ them, to expand their "share of customer" by developing expertise in these areas, several of which align with public relations better than any other marketing discipline. After all, we are the storytellers and relationship-builders, and we can help our clients weave together the disparate and often confusing strands of marketing intelligence into a cohesive marketing plan that leverages the com-

pany's brand strengths in new and engaging — not to mention cost-effective — ways.

Firms of all sizes are embracing that marketing mindset. Working on the client side, PR practitioners at airlines, hotels, cruise lines, tour operators and destinations can bring the same marketing-based approach to their organizations, by themselves, or in cooperation with their outside PR counsel.

The result? A more challenging, exciting — and ever more lucrative — path for PR professionals with a marketing mindset.

Peggy Bendel is an expert in travel marketing, crisis communications and media training. She is President of Bendel Communications in New York and Arizona, and sits on the Boards of the Association of Travel Marketing Executives (ATME) and the Public Relations Society of America's (PRSA) Travel & Tourism section. ●

Tweets cost PR firm video game client

By Greg Hazley

Video game publisher 2K Games fired PR agency The Redner Group after the boutique firm's president warned in a tweet that the firm would blacklist writers who pen negative reviews of 2K's latest release "Duke Nukem Forever."

The company said Wednesday that it "does not endorse" comments by Jim Redner and that "The Redner Group no longer represents our products."

Redner, a former Director at BNC PR who also worked at Edelman, had already backtracked from Twitter comments earlier this week when he said some reviewers had gone "too far" with reviews and that the firm was "reviewing who gets games next time and who doesn't based on today's venom."

Redner apologized via Twitter after the comments were widely covered online and said he would contact reviewers individually to apologize as well.

"Again, I want everyone to know that I was acting on my own," he said Wednesday. "2K had nothing to do with this. I am so very sorry for what I said."

Reviews of the new game have tended to be negative.

Ben Kuchera, Gaming Editor for tech news site Ars Technica, wrote that while retaliation from companies and

PR reps happens, it has rarely if ever been done publicly.

"Anyone who has done this job for any amount of time has suffered through a dry spell after giving a publisher a bad review, but this is the first time the threat of a blacklist has been made public," he wrote of the Redner incident.

Meanwhile, gamers reacted to 2K's firing the agency in various forums.

"Jim Redner is one of the more dedicated and professional PR people I've had the opportunity to work with," wrote one commenter, aegies, on the neogaf.net forum. "It sucks that a single mistake is going to put such a crunch on his career. We've all said something stupid we wish we could take back at some point."

Others were less sympathetic.

"One bad mistake is all it takes. You're a PR man," wrote another commenter, rez, on the same forum. "If you're the reason for bad PR, that's it, you're done. You spend your whole career getting **** like this drilled into your head. It isn't a 'a little slip,' it had to have been a very conscious decision."

2K is one of four clients listed on Redner's website as of June 16. ●



New-age journalism needs old-time values

By Arthur Solomon

What ever happened to the responsible press? The press that used to check the veracity of news before reporting it; the press that would report facts, not half truths; the press that would report stories in proper English; the press that would limit rumors to the gossip columnists. And yes, the press that wouldn't assume that most everything that came from a PR person was tainted.

Those of us who go back a while — especially those like me who were journalists and loved being on the reporting side prior to entering the PR business — are thought to be dinosaurs by the young communications school grads who today are legion in both the media and PR agencies.

Seven specific events gave me the impetus to write this: Rep. Michele Bachmann's State of the Union reply, Donald Trump, "The Wedding of The New Century" (thus far), the presidential primary coverage, the bin Laden killing, the Rep. Anthony Weiner saga and my recent reading of a fantastic book about a sports hero and how he was treated by what used to be called "the toy department."

(So called) "hard news" reporting

For years, PR people knew that the TV talk shows would follow the major newspapers to get story ideas. Get a story in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and other majors and often a TV producer would call you to book a guest. This still happens, but now there is more often a reversal: TV now mostly dictates what news journals will cover.

Want proof? The next time Sarah Palin and Michele Bachmann send a tweet message that gets picked up on TV, check the next day's newspapers. There it is. Reported as if they were making major proclamations, instead of self-serving, publicity seeking statements.

Bachmann is an elected member of the House of Representatives. She was elected as a Republican and still is a Republican. But to watch TV the night of her State of the Union rebuttal, and to read the next day's newspapers, she received as much attention as if hers was the official GOP reply or she was announcing that she was bolting the GOP to head up the Tea Party.

And as anyone who closely follows politics knows, every time someone who represents

the Tea Party says something, the cameras are all over it. Good journalism or journalism to create a conversation topic for the program's pundits?

Just as ludicrous is the TV and print media exposure that Trump received with his trumped-up birther issue. Perhaps TV cable news programs should be reclassified as non-reality shows.

The coverage of the bin Laden episode resulted in predictably non-news propaganda reports about accusations from Bush devotees that he was not receiving sufficient credit (what a surprise), to criticism of the fluctuating information from the Obama administration, to rumors that there wasn't proof that bin Laden was actually dead (known as the no man on the moon conspiracy theory). Even so-called sophisticated broadcasting like National Public Radio was not exempt from questionable reporting.

On its May 7 "On The Media" program, it featured past conspiracy speculations regarding bin Laden: he must be dead because he couldn't survive in a cave given his medical problems, he was killed during the 2001 bombing of Tora Bora, to the recent theory that he was killed during the early days of the Obama administration and it wasn't announced until now. Repeating such nonsense on a supposedly serious program actually helps perpetuate disproven fairy tales, which can easily be taken out of context for other propaganda uses.

Those of us who grew up as journalists witnessed how the race between the Associated Press and United Press International to break news first would result in scoops that sometimes never materialized. Reporters for dailies had more time to substantiate information. The heirs of the race to be first are TV journalists.

During the bin Laden coverage, their continuous reporting of rumors as facts, and then having to correct the information, spotlighted the sloppiness of TV news reporting during breaking stories.

But, perhaps, the incessant coverage of the never-ending, on-going presidential campaign demonstrates best how TV influences the print media. Even before all the votes are counted on election night, the cable TV pundits begin handicapping potential candidates for an election four years away. The print media, which prior to the 24-hour cable "news" programs would ignore such nonsensical political meanderings, now follows suit.

TV news reporting is also famous for the

misleading, "we have learned" lead-in to give the impression of reporting exclusive information, when every other station has the same story and it often has been in the a.m. dailies.

The 24-hour Weiner non-sex, virtual sexting coverage of a troubled person showed that both TV and print media keep on making it unnecessary to purchase supermarket tabloids for people wanting continuing coverage of salacious stories. (Remember Tiger Woods?)

"Toy department" reporting

For those uninitiated to journalism lingo: When journalism was serious, and not considered an entertainment vehicle, the phrase "toy department" referred to the sports department of a newspaper.

Today, sports sections contain more serious reporting than in the past. Players misconduct and salaries, sports marketing, exorbitant ticket prices and the value of sports properties are often the subjects. But too often, sports reporters regress to the old days, when athletes were automatically praised and new talents were promoted as the next Babe Ruth.

Not a season goes by without at least several NFL football owners being hailed as "the finest of gentleman," "a true gentleman," "someone the NFL can be proud of," "a person who has the best interest of players at heart," especially if their teams reach the Super Bowl.

And coaches aren't just proficient at their jobs. It's as if ownership and coaches were so concerned about their players that they would insist on a complete medical evaluation after an injury before letting the player back on the field, or didn't need prodding from Congress and the medical profession before admitting that concussions can have serious consequences.

And then there are the ballclub issued notes and similar athlete quotes that are reported each day. Read one newspaper, read three, all the notes and utterances are similar; the notes are often not even rewritten, a "no no" in my "cub" reporting days. A lengthy *Wall Street Journal* story on June 10 even questioned whether reporters' locker room access was still necessary.

There have been great sports editors. Vince Doria of the *Boston Globe*, Henry Freeman of *USA Today*, Dick Sandler of *Newsday*, Bill Dwyre of the *Los Angeles Times* and George (no relation) Solomon of the *Washington Post* come to mind.

Arthur Solomon is a former Senior Vice President and Senior Counselor at Burson-Marsteller. ●



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Travel experts: value vacations are here to stay

Several years ago, many travel, tourism and hospitality companies begrudgingly turned to pitching the value vacation during our nation's economic dip in the road, typically with the unspoken assumption that we'd soon return to business-as-usual (and who could forget such holiday hokum as the "Staycation" or the "Babymoon?"). While recovery still looms somewhere on the horizon, it's become increasingly obvious that value is now set to be a permanent fixture with the American traveler.

By Jon Gingerich

Travel is on the rebound in the U.S., though not to the degree most experts had predicted or would have hoped. Like the economy, indications show recovery in the travel industry is occurring, albeit at a snail's pace, certainly slower than anyone with a stake in the U.S. travel business would have liked.

There is good news. Spending on travel and tourism in the U.S. increased last year by nearly 4%, the first spike after two consecutive years of decline. Total travel expenditures in the U.S. are up nearly 8%, and international travelers visiting the U.S. are up 3.5%, according to recent figures by the U.S. Travel Association.

The U.S. hotel industry took in nearly \$128 billion in total revenue last year, a slight (.4%) increase from 2009, according to a recent Hotel Operating Statistics study. Hotel demand has continued to grow, with average domestic hotel rates now up 3% from last year, according to a study by American Express Global Business Travel.

Then there's the bad news. Gas prices have been horrendous — averaging about \$4 a gallon in the U.S. — a factor that is sure to keep families off the road for lengthy periods of time. Related to this is the current cost of airfare. Ticket prices have gone up between five and eight percent in recent months (depending on which poll you read), effectively pushing average prices into pre-recession levels without the customer demand to support it.

Instead, airlines are surviving by hitting customers with a barrage of hidden fees. Spirit Airlines announced it would now charge a \$5 fee to print boarding passes for their customers. The news comes a year after the Florida-based airline announced it would also begin charging fees for all carry-on luggage. Tellingly, airlines are now rated last in terms of customer satisfaction, according to the most recent findings by the

American Customer Satisfaction Index.

Meanwhile, U.S. hotel construction is down nearly 4% this year from 2010, according to a May STR/McGraw Hill study. A June 20 *New York Times* article reported that even vacation mainstays like Las Vegas are still reeling from the recessionary pinch, citing "stagnant" occupancy rates on the Strip and increased local unemployment for entertainment workers in the city.

By now, we're already familiar with the most dismal forecast of all. Unemployment still hovers nationally at about 9.1%, and according to the Labor Department, employers hired fewer workers in May than they had for nearly a year prior. The fact is, economic recovery isn't happening as quickly as previously promised, and U.S. travelers aren't spending like they used to.

The new normal

According to marketing and PR professionals working in the travel and tourism industries, consumers wised up during the recession. While it was once standard for travel marketers to simply push a luxury angle ("Live outside your means!" "You owe it to yourself!"), the post-recession consumer knows it just isn't good sense to spend frivolously. Sensible questions arose. "I'm paying all this money, so what am I getting in return?"

The result is an environment with a smarter, savvier traveler who's using their wallet to steer the conversation. Today's travelers want more for less, and according to experts it's a concept that's here to stay. Value is paramount, more so now than ever.

"For the past three summers, people in the industry said there'd be a day when we'd go back to normal," said Larry Meltzer, Agency Principal and Creative Director of MM2 Public Relations in Dallas. "I hate to be trite, but that's what this is. This is the new normal. For years travel providers and U.S. companies have told consumers to ask questions like 'why pay full price?' 'Why buy now if there's going to be a sale later on?'"

Consumers have been trained to see value and now they're asking the obvious question: 'Why should I spend?'"

Meltzer said PR's reliance on value messaging has now evolved to the point where it's shed its former emphasis on dollars to take on new, nimble nuances.

"It's almost as if the concept has evolved into two segments," he said. "The first is simply going for cost, and the second is more of a conceptual view of how much you can get for the dollar. It's about hotels giving more space, or access to kitchens. In these cases the value takes on a different kind of message."

Of course, price still matters. Charles Mardiks, Managing Director of MMG Mardiks in New York, said dollars still steer the American traveler. The best value conversations, however, won't simply slash prices. They'll offer the classic American incentive: freebies, deals, the combo, the package.

According to Mardiks, the process can now be targeted so well that travel companies can hit up only key segments they want to attract, thereby avoiding any alienation of an existing "luxury" base that may be turned off by bargain messages. More importantly, it can be immediate.

"People are just more value-conscious now. They're looking at every nickel they're spending these days, and they feel they're being cheated if they don't get the maximum return," Mardiks said. "I think what a lot of hotels are trying to do is push more value, less price discounting. In terms of long-term branding, it's a great tactic. It can be the small things that make a difference. A customer might say, 'okay, I still spent \$400 a night in a luxury hotel, but I got a free spa treatment out of it.'"

According to Lou Hammond, Chairman and Founder of Lou Hammond and Associates, value has surpassed its monetary connotations to the point that it can now be used to imply a learned,

Continued on next page

VALUE HERE TO STAY

Continued from previous page

almost spiritual experience. Visit local museums, take a tour, see the historical sites. Value is no longer about being “cheap.” Value now implies enrichment; it offers an experience that shapes the traveler into being a better person.

“People are becoming much more creative in how they’re spending money on vacation. That’s a good thing,” Hammond said. “Value is now about making you feel special, it’s about you doing something nice for me. People see vacation as a time when they can be enriched or educated. They can have an experience with their children and learn new things they’d never learned before.”

Americans will always travel

Value may be here for the long stretch, and it may be a conversation where luxury brands find themselves an unwilling participant. Yet, the good news remains: Hotel yield is up, and there’s still more people spending on travel than last year. Consumers may not be happy about gas prices, but if recent studies are any indication, they’ll cut costs in other areas of their lives to make a vacation happen.

Mardiks cited a recent study where consumers were asked what they would do if they were given \$5,000. More than 40% responded that they’d spend it on travel before necessities like paying bills.

“This tells us that people really need their vacations,” he said. “Even though people equate travel with a sort of luxury, people are still stressed. People see travel as equally as a state of mental health nowadays. They’re still going to travel, but how they’re going to travel is the most interesting story. The demand is there, it’s just a question of how they’ll be spending their money and where.”

And travel is still an aspirational concept. You can still hook consumers with the dream, the ideal, the fantasy. At the end of the day it all comes down to the idea of whether it’s a fantasy they can afford to indulge.

“You don’t have to convince people to take a vacation,” Hammond said. “Americans believe vacations are a right, that it’s a way of life. It’s okay to say ‘I deserve a vacation.’ They believe it’s their God-given right to have one.”

“People are just planning a little more carefully,” she continued. “They want to know where their money is going and how they’re going to spend it. They’ll seek value but the good news is they’re going to make it happen regardless.”

TRAVEL ‘POW WOW’

Continued from page 11

Fisherman’s Wharf, and aboard one of the Red and White Fleet’s many bay cruises.

Travel writers awarded

At the Media Marketplace Reception, sponsored by CityPASS and U.S. Travel, three travel writers were honored for outstanding writing, receiving awards and \$1,000 cash prizes.

The Discover America Travel Writer Award Winners were veteran journalist Mary Moore Mason, an Editorial Director based in London, who won a prize for her magazine article in *Essentially America: North American Travel & Lifestyle*; freelance writer/blogger Megan Singleton, whose story was published in New Zealand’s *Herald*; and Ilona Kauremszky, Canadian freelance writer, for her story in *One+* magazine.

Moore Mason won in the “Best U.S. Travel Destination Article” category. Her story, “From Oz to Oklahoma,” highlighted Mason’s journey through America’s heartland, from the Oz Museum (dedicated to The Wizard of Oz film and other Oz-related items) in tiny Wamego, Kansas, to the colorful cowboy heritage of Oklahoma City.

Freelance writer/blogger Megan Singleton took first place in the “Best International Pow Wow Host City Article” category. Her story featured the newly opened Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios in Orlando, Fla. (Orlando served as the 2010 IPW host city). Singleton is a two-time winner of the Discover America Travel Writer Awards, having received the honor in 2009 for a story on Las Vegas titled “In the Money.”

Canadian freelance writer Ilona Kauremszky authored the award-winning entry in the “Best Trade Article” category. Her story focused on the behind-the-scenes efforts that go into producing America’s largest “visit USA” travel trade show. Taking the perspective of the host destination and the event’s management company, Kauremszky explored the planning, logistics and endless hours that go



into producing IPW, as well as the positive economic impact the trade show has on its host city. The resulting article, “More than Amusement: Orlando Made Attendees Smile,” appeared in *One+* magazine, the official publication of Meeting Professionals International.

The 2011 Discover America Travel Writer Awards received more than 150 entries from travel journalists and editors who attended IPW 2011. During their evaluation of the entries, judges looked for articles that featured original ideas and exceptional storytelling skills, as well as prose that would inspire readers to travel to the United States.

The 2012 U.S. Travel Association’s International Pow Wow will be held April 21-25 in Los Angeles.

Carla Marie Rupp is a journalist and travel writer based in New York City. This report was assisted by Jason Rupp.

O'Dwyer's Guide to: TRAVEL & TOURISM COMMUNICATIONS

7.11



British Airways recently introduced daily non-stop flights on Boeing 777 aircraft between San Diego and London Heathrow. BA Chief Executive Keith Williams is joined by SeaWorld's Shamu, Penny Penguin and the BA promotional team as they welcome the UK to San Diego on its June 1st inaugural flight. Ágnes Huff Communications Group handled media relations for the much anticipated launch. PR strategies included arrival press conference, departure gate celebration, inaugural luncheon, business outreach and inbound and outbound press trips to highlight the new route in target media.

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Ágnes Huff, PhD, President/CEO
Anna Jerden, Vice President
Adriana Jakobsen, Account Executive

Located in Los Angeles, Ágnes Huff Communications Group (AHCG) is an award-winning, full-service public relations, marketing and crisis management firm. Established in 1995, the agency brings more than 30 years of collective experience among its strategic communications team serving a wide range of global and national clients in most major industries. With established expertise in strategic public relations counseling, media relations, online marketing, product and campaign launches, special events production, and other communications assets, AHCG's focus remains on

delivering best-in-class service to enhance client profiles and improve market position in an ever-changing business climate.

The agency's specialty travel and tourism practice continues to innovate, reaching new heights for its clients through the firm's proprietary SmarterPhD Marketing Solutions® protocol. AHCG's media relations specialists stay ahead of industry curves by demonstrating relevance in today's news climate, addressing and improving reputation issues, and changing environmental, business and marketplace needs to capture media attention and demonstrate client superiority and differentials. The firm's airline concentration includes clients such as British Airways, Qantas Airways, Qatar Airways, Bahamasair and World Airways, which have achieved top-of-mind awareness and share of voice for their brands through the firm's commitment to partnership and passion for measurable results.

Travel industry client experience includes airBC, American Airlines, Bahamasair, British Airways, FedEx, Los Angeles

World Airports, Loew's Santa Monica Beach Hotel, Mojave Airport, Princess Cruises, Singapore Airlines, Travel Indochina, Turkish Airlines, Qantas Airways, Qatar Airways and World Airways, among others.

BENDEL COMMUNICATIONS INTERNATIONAL

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Peggy Bendel, President
Sue Lomenzo, Strategic Communications/Social Marketing
Bill Baker, Destination Branding
Hank Todd, Destination Strategy

Travel is our passion, and among our team, we've covered the globe — well, not Antarctica (yet)!

Headed by HSMAT Lifetime Achievement public relations award-winner Peggy Bendel, we're a consortium of senior travel industry professionals with more than a century's real world experience, representing almost every facet of the travel industry, including countries, regions, cities, NGOs, hotels, trade shows and tour operators.

We've created award-winning solutions to marketing challenges, led teams of top marketers, handled crises of startling proportions, escorted press trips, planned special events and promotions, solved thorny problems, spoken at conferences and trade shows around the world, written articles and books — and had an exciting and fulfilling time doing so. We also enjoy working in partnership with other firms to tackle special assignments that might disrupt ongoing client services, from crisis communications to special events.

Public speaking is a forte, as well: among us, we have served as keynote speakers, workshop leaders and panelists on the top-

ics of public relations, marketing, social media, destination branding, strategic communications, media training and organizational structure at conferences around the world, most recently in Canada, Norway, Madeira, Uganda and the US.

Current tourism clients include Arizona Office of Tourism, preparing to celebrate the State's Centennial in 2012; Peter Sommer Travels (peter-sommer.com), offering historic and culinary gulet sailing and land tours of coastal Turkey, Greece and Sicily; and Montana-based Ecology Project International (ecologyproject.org), pairing US high school students with their peers in Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to enhance and restore wildlife and habitat. Peggy sits on the Boards of PRSA's Travel & Tourism Section and the Association of Travel Marketing Executives. She is the author of the forthcoming book "It's a Crisis! Now What? A Step-by-step Crisis Communications Handbook for the Global Hospitality Industry."

BLAZE PR

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John Davies, CEO
Karen Gee-McAuley, Executive Vice President

Award-winning, nationally-ranked Blaze PR has helped travel and hospitality clients stay relevant for more than 20 years by finding their unique voice, the right distribution channel for their messages and making communications work successfully for their business. Based in Los Angeles, with New York and San Francisco partner offices, Blaze's approach to public relations is impactful. The agency is strategic, using valuable benchmarking and planning processes applied to creative and integrated PR campaigns designed to meet clients' objectives.

Implementing a variety of strategies, from off and online media relations, strategic partnerships and promotions or event marketing and community relations, Blaze has represented more than 175 clients in the tourism industry. Some of the agency's award-winning work includes campaigns for Marina del Rey CVB, Shell Vacations Hospitality, Tourism Queensland, Westin St. Maarten, and Viking River Cruises.

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Lauren Mackiel Gory, Assistant Vice President
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Coyne PR's Travel practice possesses the creativity, experience and passion to make a game-changing impact on your business. Our team has managed and executed world-class events and promotions, brand building campaigns, social media programs and media relations for some of the travel industry's most prominent brands and destinations. Clients include: Hard Rock International, Disney Parks & Resorts, Adventures by Disney, Disney Cruise Lines, South African Tourism and the Hong Kong Tourism Board. The Coyne Travel team has developed ideas and campaigns that take our clients (and the media) to new heights — sometimes literally — as in the case with the launch of SkyJump Las Vegas,

The August issue of *O'Dwyer's* will profile PR firms that specialize in investor relations, and will have a second section profiling PR firms that specialize in professional services. If you would like your firm to be listed, contact Editor Jon Gingerich at 646/843-2080 or jon@odwyerpr.com

which encouraged consumers to take an 855-foot leap of faith off the top of the Stratosphere Hotel Tower. Our in-depth knowledge of the travel industry and long-standing relationships with the travel media help brands stand out in the crowded travel marketplace.

DEVELOPMENT COUNSELLORS INTERNATIONAL (DCI)

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Andrew Levine, President/Chief Creative Officer
Karyl Leigh Barnes, Senior Vice President/Partner

DCI is the leader in marketing places. Since 1960 the firm has worked exclusively in tourism and economic development marketing serving more than 400 destinations. Current U.S. travel clients include the states of California, Massachusetts, New Mexico and North Carolina and the cities/regions of Corpus Christi, Finger Lakes, Louisville, Park City, Portland, Sunny Isles and Williamsburg, as well as CityPASS and the US Travel Association.

Our roster of international clients grew dramatically in the past year when DCI acquired Mondotels, a firm specialized in MICE marketing since 1987. Current international clients include Colombia, Copenhagen, Dubai, Melbourne, Montecarlo, Namibia, Scotland, Sweden, Tasmania and Toronto.

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Neil Mortine, President and CEO
Melissa Dykstra, SVP, Executive Director
Marty McDonald, VP, Tourism Practice Area Leader

Fahlgren Mortine provides public relations services for clients across many industries



Hard Rock charged Coyne PR with generating national broadcast media for its Winner's Way Parking Garage grand opening in Hollywood, FL. To mark the opening, the property hosted the "World's Largest Guitar Smash" and Guinness World Records was on site to officiate the record. Rockers Huey Lewis and The News led the official smash of 1,914 participants and the property provided a donation of \$50,000 worth of guitars to music programs in South Florida schools. Media results included more than 12 million broadcast media impressions and 200 placements with national broadcast coverage on CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, HLN, NBC's "Early Today" and ABC "World News Now."

and is a top 35 independent firm nationally (currently #31 on the O'Dwyer's list). The firm has been recognized with dozens of top national PR and tourism awards, including Silver and Bronze Anvils from the Public Relations Society of America, and, in 2010, Fahlgren Mortine received a Mercury award from the U.S. Travel Association in the category of public and media relations.

With 55 associates and scores of clients based in more than 25 states from California to Connecticut, Fahlgren Mortine is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, with locations in

Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton and Toledo, Ohio; Parkersburg and Charleston, W.Va.; Denver, Colo.; Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; and Lexington, Ky.

Travel industry client experience includes Appalachian Regional Commission; Ohio Tourism Division; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service; Cedar Fair; Lake Erie Shores & Islands; North Dakota National Parks; Experience Columbus; Franklin Park Conservatory; and many other destinations, cities / communities/regions, convention and visitor bureaus, hotels/hospitality properties, festivals, attractions and more.



Fahlgren Mortine team members enjoy some local culture during a media mixer at the 2011 PRSA/SATW conference in San Antonio, TX.



The U.S. Grant, a Luxury Collection Hotel, has become an icon in San Diego over the last 100 years. The hotel has hosted numerous celebrities and luminaries in its day, including 14 U.S. Presidents. J Public Relations has formed an ongoing relationship with The U.S. Grant, handling all aspects of the property's PR for almost three years. JPR recently played an integral role in the planning efforts of The U.S. Grant's Centennial Anniversary, which included extensive national pitching resulting in extraordinary coverage by top-tiered media such as *Los Angeles Times*, *Today Show*, *ABCNews.com*, *Hotel Chatter*, *Hotel Business*, *Wine & Food Travel*, *Successful Meetings*, *Smart Meetings*, and *Gentry*.

FRENCH / WEST / VAUGHAN

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Rick French, Chairman & CEO
David Gwyn, President / Principal
Natalie Best, Executive Vice President / Principal

French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast's largest independent public relations, public affairs and brand communications agency, and is the nation's 18th largest independently-owned PR firm. Founded in 1997, the agency is headquartered in Raleigh, N.C. and also has offices in New York City, Dallas, Tampa, and Los Angeles.

FWV's dedicated travel and tourism practice boasts extensive destination marketing experience, specializing in lifestyle and leisure marketing and public relations. Travel and tourism industry experience includes work with Divi Resorts and its nine Caribbean properties, and co-operative destination marketing with each of the tourism organizations for Aruba, Barbados, Bonaire, St. Croix (U.S.V.I. Dept. of Tourism) and St. Maarten. In addition, FWV

has worked with Gatlinburg, Tennessee; Cabarrus County, North Carolina — home to NASCAR's Lowe's Motor Speedway; Oakland County, Michigan; Tweetsie Railroad — North Carolina's Oldest Theme Park; Branson, Missouri; the Old Salem Moravian village in North Carolina; the Greater Raleigh CVB; the Wilmington Convention & Visitor's Bureau (N.C.), and America's Historic Triangle, located in Williamsburg, Virginia.

In addition to its diverse range of travel and tourism clients, FWV works with many of the world's leading companies and brands, including international utility provider ABB, the Coca-Cola Company, Wrangler, the Justin Boot Company, Moe's Southwest Grill restaurants, spirits company Hood River Distillery, and the U.S. Polo Association. The agency's fully integrated creative and digital team provides award-winning advertising, graphic design and digital and social media services for a wide range of clients.

GRAHAM & ASSOCIATES, INC.

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Lydia Graham, President and Founder

Graham & Associates offers strategic national and international public relations and social media for companies and nonprofits in high-tech, consumer lifestyle/travel, and health and wellness. Its successful track record working with established and emerging companies provides results and excellence in the following core competencies: national and international media relations, comprehensive company and product launch programs, online PR, strategic communications, branding/positioning and content creation. The award-winning firm (52 top national PR awards, including Best Communications Campaign North America from IBA, the Special Creativity Award from IPRA and the Silver Anvil) is known for its highly creative and effective results-driven campaigns. The firm operates in 11 countries throughout North America and Europe through Plexus, its exclusive organization of international PR agencies. Contact 415/986-7212 or pr@graham-associates.com.

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Jennifer Hawkins, President
Amy Newcomb, Vice President
Anna Stancioff, Vice President

A New York boutique PR agency, Jennifer Hawkins and her team have extensive experience representing leading luxury hotels, resorts, spas, destinations, and travel products. The firm represents a roster of world-class clients and fully understands the global big picture issues of today and constantly changing media landscape.

They have unrivaled personal relationships with print and broadcast media as well as with the leading players in digital media. Their collective passion for travel perfectly complements

their detailed, creative approach and undeniably spot-on results.

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Jamie Lynn Sigler and **Kim
Julin Guyader**, Founding Partners
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With offices in San Diego and New York City, J Public Relations is a bi-coastal hospitality and lifestyle public relations agency, working with many recognized brands, nationally and internationally. From distinctive, boutique hotel properties to global corporate brands, JPR enthusiastically offers clients unique insight and forward-thinking strategies that keep them in the media spotlight long after the initial buzz has died down. J Public Relations' strength lies not only in traditional media but also in social media and new media. The JPR team devises social media strategies that drastically increase clients' visibility and footprint on the web. A sampling of J Public Relations' impressive client list includes Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, The White Barn Inn, The US GRANT, Vanderbilt Grace, Washington School House Hotel, The Regent Palms, Lake Placid Lodge, Willow Stream Spas, YCO Yachts, Rancho Bernardo Inn, Surf & Sand Resort and Hilton San Diego Bayfront.

KEITH SHERMAN & ASSOCIATES

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

Keith Sherman & Associates provides diversified public relations and marketing communications services to travel, entertainment, media and lifestyles clients.

KSA has represented "The New

York Times Travel Show" since its inception eight years ago. Clients include the Montreal Jazz Festival, Luminato in Toronto, The Abu Dhabi Festival, New York Marriott Marquis, Hertz, The Ryokan Collection (Japanese boutique hotels), Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Sony, The Onion, *Architectural Digest*, Columbia University, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, The Broadway League, Bristol-Myers Squibb and "The New York Times Arts & Leisure Weekend."

KSA is a member of the IGLTA and provides specialize expertise in reaching the LGBT market.

KSA has also publicized hundreds of films, network and cable television broadcasts, Broadway, national touring productions and high profile events for such clients as Focus Features, Universal Pictures, Tony Awards on CBS for 18 years, Olympic Medalist Brian Boitano, Bolshoi Ballet and others.

KSA is a hands-on agency distinguished by innovation, smart strategic thinking, proactive effort, integrity, personal attention, responsiveness and a passionate drive to deliver excellent results for the clients we represent.

The company is headquartered in Times Square.

KTCPR

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Richard S. Kahn, President
Theresa Oakes, Account Supervisor

Kahn Travel Communications, also known as KTCpr, is a 20-year-old public relations, marketing and publishing company formed by Richard S. Kahn, former Editor-in-Chief and Associate Publisher of *Travel Agent* magazine.

Kahn, having spent 22 years as a reporter, writer and editor for newspapers and magazines, has a strong understanding and connection to the media — the end game for any public relations agency.

KTCpr was launched with a purpose — to be responsive to the media and act as a resource. In that way, the company has been able to sustain a steady growth based on the success of achieving results, in large part thanks to Kahn's relationships with the media. KTCpr employees have all been indoctrinated

into the fold, and response time on media queries is basically zero. Our expertise covers media relations, the creation of promotions (print, radio and Internet), the launch of new hotels and resorts, marketing consultation, crisis communication, speech writing and publishing services.

A testament to KTCpr's quality of work and the tireless dedication of the staff, clients are also very loyal — the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (19 years), La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club in Aruba (20 years). Other clients include St. Maarten Tourist Office (3 years), Philippine Department of Tourism (5 years), Victoria Cruises (10 years), Travel Impressions (6 years), Spice Island Beach Resort in Grenada (13 years), Blue Horizons Garden Resort in Grenada (13 years), Mango Bay in Barbados (11 years), Interval International (13 years), The New Yorker Hotel (4 years), Pacific Delight Tours (2 years) and Pink Beach Club Bermuda (returned after trying another agency for 2 years) and new clients Lighthouse Bay Resort in Barbuda and Aranui Cruiseline in the South Pacific.

Key placements over the years have been TV exposure on "Today," "The Early Show" and local New York news stations as well as coverage in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Newsday*, *The Boston Globe*, *Miami Herald*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Sports Illustrated* and many more in addition to all the major travel trade publications.

LAURA DAVIDSON PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Laura Davidson, President
Leslie Cohen, Executive Vice President

As the media world shifts and evolves, LDPR is constantly adapting its PR strategies to grasp every new opportunity. After carefully assessing each client's goals, we blend the best traditional "tools" with the latest digital/social media tactics to generate outstanding, award-winning results.

LDPR believes in a collaborative approach, seeing PR as an integral part of our clients' overall



The LDPR team congratulates actress and philanthropist Holly Robinson Peete, recipient of Residence Inn by Marriott's inaugural "Resident Mom" award in May 2011.

marketing strategy. We are proactive and results-oriented, setting precise goals and striving to exceed them. We are known for a dynamic creativity that has earned us more than 50 HSMAI Awards. And we are proud of the longevity of our client relationships (many have stayed loyal to LDPR for eight years or more).

LDPR represents many of the most prestigious destinations and resorts in the world. Our current client roster includes VisitScotland, Tourisme Montréal, Melbourne/Tourism Victoria in Australia, Bal Harbour, Florida, the island of Mustique, Eden Rock in St. Barths, Curtain Bluff in Antigua, Paws Up in Montana, Preferred Hotel Group, Atlantis — Paradise Island, Trump SoHo New York, Abercrombie & Kent, RockResorts and Vail Resorts Hospitality, and Residence Inn by Marriott, among others.

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Lou Hammond, Founder and Chairman
Stephen Hammond, President
Terence Gallagher, Executive Vice President

Founded in 1984, Lou Hammond & Associates (LH&A) is the recognized leader in travel and hospitality public relations. LH&A's experience in all facets of tourism from destination,

Continued on page 24



Sandals Resorts celebrates 30 years of innovation at Lou Hammond & Associates' New York City offices. Pictured left to right, Ryvis Sierra and Debbie White of Sandals Resorts, agency chair, Lou Hammond and Cathy Decker, senior vice president.



Middleton & Gendron launched the Trump Royal Wedding Breakfast at Trump International Hotel & Tower New York — the first U.S. hotel package tied to the Royal Wedding. Kathie Lee Gifford and Hoda Kotb, hosts of the fourth hour of TODAY, were on hand at the event, which started at 5 a.m. The campaign garnered over 231 million impressions, including 9.6 million households during a simulcast of the event on TODAY.

Photo: Betsy Low

LOU HAMMOND

Continued from page 23

where LH&A represents a diverse clientele that includes cities and states, counties and countries, to hotel, spa, cruise and culinary, is among the most highly honored and recognized in the industry, winning more Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIA) Adrian Awards over the past decade than any other entrant.

The company's passion as well as an unswerving commitment to quality is a legacy driven by its legendary founder and chairman, Lou Hammond, regarded as one of the most well-known and enthusiastic advocates for LH&A clients and the industry as a whole.

The Lou Hammond approach is no nonsense and straightforward. The company creates innovative, value-driven campaigns for traditional and social

mediums marked by strategic thinking and swift action that lead to measurable, bottom-line results. This method, along with an ability to respond to market changes quickly, has earned the company the trust of its clients and most proudly for the agency, long-term relationships — including Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, an LH&A client for more than two decades.

This year, Lou Hammond & Associates has added to their list of distinguished tourism clients including: Tourism Authority of Thailand, Marriott and Renaissance Caribbean & Mexico Resorts and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The company also created mini-campaigns for the annual International Festival of Arts and Ideas in New Haven, CT, the opening of Historic Charleston City Market and the "cultural all-nighter," Sleepless Night Miami Beach.

MARX LAYNE & COMPANY

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Michael Layne, President

Since its founding in 1987, the success experienced by Marx Layne & Co. in the travel and tourism sector can be directly attributed to its ability to create cost-effective public

Relations and digital marketing strategies that place destinations and attractions in front of the right audiences with the right messages at the right times.

The agency's travel, hospitality and tourism practice has encompassed international, national, regional and local campaigns for large organizations, nationally recognized resorts, award-winning restaurants and hotels, as well as individual tourist and retail destinations.

The agency has conceptualized and conducted digital and social media and media relations campaigns, grand openings, promotional activities, special events, strategic marketing and Media training programs for Travel Michigan, MGM Grand Detroit and Hotel, Best Western, Shanty Creek, Detroit Zoo, America Haunts, Townsend Hotel and Detroit Science Center. Agency clients have been recognized as the best in their industry sector as a result of our award-winning work conducted on their behalf.

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Meryl D. Pearlstein, President

MDP Publicity is a boutique PR and writing agency, specializing in the hospitality, travel, food and lifestyle industries. With clients ranging from luxury hotels and resorts to restaurants, destinations and tour operators — along with expertise in writing for all types of media — the Agency has deep understanding of what motivates

today's traveler and today's journalist.

MDP Publicity's ability to highlight what is most meaningful and interesting about its clients is demonstrated repeatedly in the Agency's emphasis on strategic media relations. Creative, interactive and results-oriented media tours, media receptions and marketplaces are scheduled according to a client's needs and budget, with press releases, interviews and press visits filling out each program.

Taking center stage in all PR programs is the Agency's expertise in social media, integrating blogs, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other real-time tools with traditional print and electronic media.

The Agency works closely with clients to develop targeted niche programs such as app-focused or literary getaways for The Wayfarers walking vacations; "green" and Ayurvedic/wellness programs at Tabacón Grand Spa Thermal Resort (Costa Rica); language immersion holidays for Cactus Language Vacations; chef-led biking, hiking, skiing and culinary tours for Italiaoutdoors; and adventures-of-a-lifetime for Adventure Center and iExplore.

The Agency also specializes in working on projects for U.S. CVBs and international Tourist Boards including Florida, Bavaria and Louisiana.

MIDDLETON & GENDRON

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Yvonne Middleton, Chairman

In its 34th year, Middleton & Gendron continues to represent the best of the best in travel, hospitality and lifestyle.

With its exceptionally talented staff, M&G enjoys great bench depth while also cultivating up and comers among its account executives. The past year has brought a lot of movement — literally and figuratively. The agency moved to striking, sunny new offices on Third Avenue in midtown and worked aggressively to launch new hotel, real estate and lifestyle clients.

Among the hotels, the agency successfully positioned The Setai Fifth Avenue as the new heart of midtown Manhattan, and Trump

SoHo New York as downtown's most exciting and exclusive addition. Throughout the year, the agency used news events to great advantage, designing, for instance, a Royal Wedding Package for Trump International Hotel & Tower New York that yielded phenomenal coverage including a live broadcast from NBC's Today Show (see photo).

The agency continued to prove to its clients that the most effective PR programs integrate traditional media with online and social networking.

As has always been true, M&G helped its clients transition to new management, design events to attract influencers, create special on- and off-line promotions, and manage the occasional crisis. Its staff, however, still found time to pursue its private board and community work for organizations including Women's Sports Foundation and Washington Spa Alliance.

The agency looks forward to a year of keeping its core hotel and travel clients front and center, growing its digital and production practices further, and developing strong synergies between its hospitality and general lifestyle clients.

MISSY FARREN & ASSOCIATES

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Missy Farren & Associates is a mid-sized public relations agency offering the personal attention of a boutique firm while delivering meaningful results that impact bottom line. Our passion for travel drives our professional success and our relationships in various travel niches, including: culinary, adventure, family, romance, Caribbean, wellness/spa, arts/culture, sports and more. From strategic media relations and social media strategy and management, to partnership development and event facilitation, to spokesperson positioning and crisis communications, we work as an extension of our clients' marketing and public relations departments and in complete of their goals.

A team of agile, professional marketers, we deliver results in mainstream and unexpectedly outlets. Our innovative thinking and never-say-never attitude allow us to consistently exceed expectations.

Travel industry experience includes: Aspen Ski Co.; Cayman Airways; Cayman Cookout; The Cayman Islands Department of Tourism; The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Colorado Ski Country; Copper Mountain; Disneyland 50th Anniversary; Disneyland Food & Beverage; Limelight Lodge; The Little Nell; The Lodge at Woodloch; Michelin Food & Travel; Montagna Restaurant; The Ritz-Carlton Hotels of New York; Royal Plantation Collection; Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort; The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg; Squaw Valley USA; Steamboat; Stratton; Tremblant; Twin Farms; Whistler Blackcomb; Winter Park; and more.

MMG MARDIKS

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Charles Mardiks, *Managing Director*
Roland B. Alonzi, *Vice President, Account Group Director*

MMG Mardiks is a creative collaboration of some of the sharpest minds in travel and tourism public relations. A subsidiary of MMG Worldwide, a global marketing communications agency serving the world's premier travel and tourism brands, MMG Mardiks is a strategic communications firm with personalized senior-level service and large agency resources. MMG Mardiks offers comprehensive public relations, media relations, and marketing communications services including: digital/social media campaigns, crisis communications, event marketing, and partnership marketing. MMG Mardiks' powerful digital/social media practice seamlessly integrates new media, social networking, geo-targeting, and LiveWeb strategies using channels such as Facebook, Twitter, FourSquare, YouTube, Flickr, and others to build digital buzz and business for our clients.

In January 2011, MMG Mardiks wrapped up the "World's Unluckiest Traveler" social media campaign on behalf of Travel Guard North America. Designed to educate consumers on the benefits of travel insurance, the year-long effort provided a lighthearted look at the disruptions today's travelers face — from ash clouds to earth-



Travel Guard North America crowned Dr. Gary Feldman of Ventura, CA, the "World's Unluckiest Traveler" in January 2011. Feldman, who fell off a cliff during a medical mission in Vietnam, accepted the award during a travel-themed comedy show and media reception in New York organized by MMG Mardiks. Travel trade writer and comedy troupe member Harvey Chipkin (left) and Dean Sivley, CEO of Travel Guard North America (right) were on hand to present him with a trophy and a \$10,000 dream vacation.

quakes, and every flight delay in between. At launch, the public was invited to post their travel nightmares on a campaign microsite for the chance to win a \$10,000 dream vacation. Entrants were encouraged to share their stories with their social networks to solicit votes and spread the contest virally. Keeping with the good-humored theme, MMG Mardiks announced the contest winner in an unconventional fashion, enlisting the help of an improv comedy troupe featuring travel trade writer Harvey Chipkin. The troupe's performance, which poked fun at the year in travel, drew more than 20 editors and writers from outlets including *Travel + Leisure*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, ABCNews.com, and more. MMG Mardiks' traditional and social media strategies resulted in more than 64 million impressions and a 20 percent increase in sales on TravelGuard.com.

Current clients include: The Colorado Tourism Office, Hotel Missoni, Lebua Hotels and Resorts, MasterCard, Radisson Edwardian Hotels, Regent Hotels & Resorts, Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino, Renaissance Curaçao Resort & Casino, The Rezidor Hotel Group, Radisson Blu Hotels and Resorts, Park Inn, Ringling International Arts Festival, Rocky Mountaineer, Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau, ShermansTravel Media, and Travel Guard.

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Michael Kempner, *Pres. & CEO*
Alissa Blate, *Executive Vice President, Global Consumer Marketing Practice Leader*

MWW Group executes strategic high-impact campaigns to connect destinations and hospitality brands with consumers and the media. We've represented a full-range of hotels, destinations, airlines and travel publishers to create engagement, re-energize brands, increase mind and market share, and create news opportunities.

MWW Group has established relationships with influential members of the consumer travel, business and trade press. We leverage our industry expertise to create ownable campaigns and positioning programs that elevate destinations and increase traffic and bookings. Our award-winning digital team combines research and analysis with knowledge of the social media landscape to develop digital strategies that drive traveler engagement. We understand our

Continued on page 26



Nancy J. Friedman won the Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Public Relations at the 2011 Hotel Sales Marketing Association International Awards. The Agency took home an additional 12 awards for diverse clients including: Starwood Hotels & Resorts; Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown; The Jane Hotel; The Pod Hotel; Gansevoort Hotel Group.

MWW GROUP

Continued from page 25

client's business goals and design relevant public relations campaigns to achieve measurable

results.

In the past year, MWW Group was named "Midsize Agency of the Year" and "Strategic PR Agency of the Year" by *The Holmes Report* and "Digital Firm & Team of the Year" and a "Top Place to Work in PR" by *PR News*.



Florence Quinn, president of Quinn & Co. PR, on break with Richard David Story, editor-in-chief of *Departures*, while shooting *Luxury Manifesto*, an online series of chats with global thought leaders on the meaning of luxury hosted by John Vanderslice, head of Hilton Luxury & Lifestyle.

NANCY J. FRIEDMAN PUBLIC RELATIONS, INC.

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Nancy J. Friedman, President
Emily Wilson, Sr. Vice President
Keri Firstenberg Prestia, Vice President

NJFPR's "Leave No Stone Unturned" philosophy has catapulted the firm to the top of the category in travel and hospitality. For clients seeking senior level counsel, advocacy of their product and unrivalled media savvy, Nancy J. Friedman Public Relations is a first-stop. A self-described "media junkie with wanderlust", Nancy and her team pride themselves on long-term partnerships with clients and the ability to wring every ounce of marketing potential out of a property or destination utilizing social media, traditional media, events and creative promotions. Our portfolio of clients include: Ian Schrager's Public Chicago (Ambassador East and Pump Room); Hotel Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY; Z Hotel, Long Island City, NY; The Charles Hotel, Boston; Le Sport/Body Holiday, St. Lucia; Rendezvous, St. Lucia; Elysian Hotel, Chicago; Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa, Atlantic City; The Water Club - A Signature Hotel by Borgata; Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort & Casino; Gansevoort, Turks and Caicos; Grand Hyatt New York; Gansevoort Park, New York; Hotel Gansevoort, New York; The Maritime Hotel, New York; The Bowery Hotel, New York; The Jane, New York; The Pod Hotel, New York; Apple Core Hotels, New York; Sheraton Hotels & Resorts Worldwide; Westin Hotels & Resorts Worldwide; JW Marriott Camelback Inn Resort & Spa, Scottsdale; JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa, Palm Desert; Spring Creek Ranch, Jackson Hole, WY; The Condado Vanderbilt, Puerto Rico; Doubletree Hilton, San Juan, Puerto Rico; The Courtyard Isla Verde, Puerto Rico; La Concha Resort: A Renaissance Hotel, Puerto Rico; El Convento, San Juan, Puerto Rico; St. Petersburg/Clearwater, Florida; Cooperstown, New York; The

Otesaga Hotel, Cooperstown, NY; Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, NY; Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, NY; Farmer's Museum, Cooperstown, NY; The Elysian Spa & Health Club, Chicago; The Spa at Camelback Inn, Scottsdale, AZ; The Spa at Desert Springs, Palm Desert, CA; Wilderness Adventure Spa at Spring Creek Ranch, Jackson Hole, WY; Ria at the Elysian Hotel, Chicago; Matsuri at The Maritime Hotel, New York.

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Samantha Allen, Managing Director, Global Consumer Marketing

We know tourism. Our team consists of travel and tourism experts with specific strengths in the areas of consumer and brand PR, corporate communications, crisis communications and reputation management, events management, trade marketing, partnership and alliances, sponsorship creation and leverage, content creation and development, digital and traditional media relations. Ogilvy PR has successfully elevated brands across a variety of travel industry categories including, hospitality, tour, cruise, airline, transportation, technology and destinations. Our combination of research-based strategy, break through creativity, and flawless execution deliver strong media talkability and business building impact. Our work has helped clients to reach potential travelers where they work, live and play. Relevant travel and tourism clients include the Mexico Tourism Board, Virgin Airlines, Tourism New South Wales, Hilton Hotels, Tourism Australia, Ireland Golf, Singapore Airlines, Brazil, Scotland, France, Chile, Malta and Hong Kong.

View and download profiles of PR firms from our online database, which now features hundreds of firms listed in 12 different specialty areas, now searchable by Google:

WWW.ODWYERPR.COM

PERITUS

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Peritus is a national, full-service communications agency with offices in Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Ohio and Alabama, that offers layered expertise in public relations, public affairs, marketing and creative services. We produce award-winning campaigns for tourism and hospitality clients, including the City of Gatlinburg, Marriott Hotels, 21c Museum Hotel, Hotel Preston and the Louisville and Lexington Convention and Visitors Bureaus. With offices in many tourist destinations' feeder markets, we leverage local knowledge and relationships to bring designations to life among target audiences through events and social and traditional media outreach. Our work has produced media placements in many local and regional media outlets, as well as national and international ones, including the *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The View*, *The London Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Travel + Leisure Magazine*, *Vanity Fair*, *W Magazine*, *USA Today* and *Southern Living*. Our relentless, passionate efforts deliver winning solutions for our clients.

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David Semanoff, *Associate Vice President and Head of Food, Wine + Spirits*, @dsems

Quinn & Co. combines strong strategic thinking with our signature creative approach to develop dynamic and highly effective integrated PR programs. We help clients in our core areas of Travel, Real Estate and Food, Wine + Spirits to achieve goals, reach target

audiences with key message points and ultimately drive business.

Quinn & Co.'s innovative initiatives are recognized globally and have earned us hundreds of awards; including two, back-to-back HSMAI Best of Show Awards for Best Travel PR Campaign of the Year, Worldwide. We were the U.S. PR firm behind the blockbuster The Best Job in the World campaign for Tourism Queensland where more than 34,600 people from 200 countries applied for the job of Island Caretaker.

The social-media phenomenon produced 336,000 Facebook-referred website visits and more than 3,170 Twitter followers. Over 6.7 million people visited the website, and 423,000 people voted. Best Job generated \$11 million worth of media exposure.

We have many compelling success stories: We developed *Luxury Manifesto*, a series of interviews with luxury leaders, for Hilton *Luxury*. We invented *Martini on the Rock*, the \$10,000 martini at The Algonquin Hotel that was covered by 400 TV segments, including *Letterman*, *Regis & Kelly*, *Ellen* and *Good Morning America*, and made it into *Trivial Pursuit*. We created a new niche product, *Procreation Vacation*, for Starwood Caribbean.

The agency offers a Digital Audit for social media, SEO, blogs and Web sites. We identify opportunities and challenges then generate recommendations to meet goals, manage reputation and engage.

RBB PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Christine Barney, *CEO*
Lisa Ross, *President*
Tina Elmowitz, *Executive VP*

Miami-based rbb Public Relations is a leading national PR firm with a wealth of experience serving hospitality entities from hotel companies and airlines to destinations and cruise lines. The agency prides itself on delivering award-winning campaigns that use smart communications to persuade, motivate and influence consumer decisions. The PR agency is also recognized for best practices in media relations, corporate and crisis communications, product introductions and digital / social media.



rbb Public Relations puts the spotlight on Homewood Suites by Hilton's national partnership with early literacy advocacy group, Books For Kids. Bill Duncan, Global Head, Brand Management, Homewood Suites by Hilton reads "Lewis the Duck Goes to Canada" to a group of captivated children at the new Homewood Suites Books For Kids library in D.C., one of two opened by the Hilton brand since 2010.

rbb's Travel & Leisure roster includes brands such as Homewood Suites by Hilton; Zoëtry Wellness & Spa Resorts, Secrets, Dreams, Now and Suncscape Resorts & Spas by AMResorts; and Canyon Ranch Hotel & Spa. Recently, the firm received a Silver Adrian Award by Hospitality, Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) for its "Flu-Free Guarantee" campaign developed for client AMResorts. In 2010, the firm also received a Silver Anvil and a Silver Sabre for its work for AMResorts and in 2009 a Silver Sabre for its crisis management program for client Costa Maya.

Three-time winner of the "PR Agency of the Year" title, rbb gives its *Fortune* 500 and entrepreneurial clients award-worthy counsel and results, with the individual attention only a boutique agency can provide. Explore how rbb's employee-driven workplace results in extraordi-

nary client satisfaction at www.rbbpr.com or call 305/448-7457.

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Victoria Feldman de Falco,
Principal
Christina Miranda Diaz, *Principal*

Specializing in travel, hospitality, interior design, and home furnishings, Redpoint is a full service marketing PR firm with

Continued on page 28



Redpoint Marketing PR helped kids learn how to "play dirty" at Sulphur Springs as part of the Saint Lucia Tourist Board's "Go Bananas" family program.



Weber Shandwick's Travel & Lifestyle practice launched the world's largest cruise ship in 2010, Royal Caribbean International's Allure of the Seas. The team executed a multi-faceted PR campaign that included an hour-long live broadcast of the TODAY Show with Kathie Lee & Hoda, successfully generating unprecedented fanfare for a second-in-class ship launch.

REDPOINT MARKETING

Continued from page 27

an entrepreneurial style, brand building expertise, and a passion for results. We orchestrate compelling campaigns that integrate traditional PR with sophisticated digital and social media marketing initiatives.

Select travel/hospitality clients include the Saint Lucia Tourist Board, Loews Hotels; The Principality of Monaco; The Benjamin Hotel; TAG Galyean AIA; Woodstock Inn & Resort, VT; Broadway.com; Ripley's Believe It or Not! Times Square; US Tour Operations Association; Hidden Pond Resort, ME; The Tides Beach Club, ME; The Kennebunkport Inn, ME; The

Cottages at Cabot Cove, ME; The Old Fort Inn, ME; The Dylan Hotel, Amsterdam; Simon Pearce

Redpoint executives bring a "nose for news" to every client challenge, ensuring that marketing ideas have just the right dash of risk to make them significantly newsworthy without being operationally challenging to implement.

ROGERS & COWAN

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Tom Tardio, CEO
Tara Walls, EVP



The Prime Minister of Saint Vincent & the Grenadines the Honorable Ralph E. Gonzales with Chris Spring of Spring, O'Brien, at the launch of their new branding and Mobile APP, developed by the agency.

Rogers & Cowan offers significant experience in creating and executing integrated marketing and PR campaigns for clients in the travel and tourism industries, including resorts and resort developers, hotel associations, government tourism offices, visitors bureaus, museum and cultural exhibits, airlines, tour packagers, cruise lines and travel magazines.

We create PR and marketing strategies that elevate a client's core messages beyond travel outlets and into the lifestyle media through the influence of entertainment. Our distinctive approach goes beyond media relations to include destination integration, promotions, influencer seeding, special events, social media and green marketing. The agency's work has included building awareness for hotels and resorts through celebrity seeding programs, positioning countries as perfect travel destinations through destination integrations in films and television shows, creating online content tied to entertainment properties, and activating sponsorship of entertainment events. In 2010, R&C received two Buzz Awards recognizing our work integrating American Airlines into Paramount's blockbuster film, "Up in the Air."

Current / past clients include American Airlines, The Islands of the Bahamas, Canadian Tourism Commission, Travel Alberta, Bodies the Exhibition, Titanic the Artifact Exhibition, Royal Caribbean, InterContinental Hotels Group, Miami Boutique Hotels, The Seaport, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

SPRING O'BRIEN

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Chris Spring, President
David Kleinman, Executive VP
Lauren Kaufman, Vice President

With more channels of communication today than ever, the need for dynamically engaging content has never been greater. There's no longer a box to think outside of! Attuned to the "new normal" demands thrive as well

as innovation to achieve the competitive edge, sparking new business opportunities for our clients by burnishing public relations, social media and branding campaigns with creative ideas from online marketing and advertising.

We consistently achieve high-visibility broadcast and cable TV, print and online coverage to catapult client brands beyond the fray of an ever-realigning marketplace. Drawing from travel-related areas like food and wine to architecture and design, we forge partner and media opportunities rather than wait for them. We don't tell our clients stories, we get their stories told — delivering integrated campaign solutions, leveraging celebrity participation in special events, on-location film shoots and colorful spokespersons to bring our clients' competitive advantages to life.

Our success in achieving "the visible difference" for tourism boards, tour operators, airlines, hotels and resorts and other travel companies speaks for itself. We invite you to explore how we can put our experience to work for you.

WEBER SHANDWICK

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Rene Mack, President, Travel & Lifestyle
Alice Diaz, Executive Vice President, Travel & Lifestyle

Weber Shandwick's Travel & Lifestyle practice excels in creating comprehensive marketing strategies for clients that leverage offline and online media channels, digital media platforms, promotions, and brand and entertainment integrations to speak directly to consumers. In a shifting industry, these programs secure headlines, ignite conversations and drive the bottom line for clients.

Known for innovation, collaboration and creativity, the Travel practice has earned major industry awards from PRSA Anvils and PRWeek, to a record 15 Platinum HSMIAI

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ORDER PR'S MOST USEFUL DIRECTORY!

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O'Dwyer's Directory gives you 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 Directory** is the place to shop.

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- Robert L. Dilenschneider, The Dilenschneider Group

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Why O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms is so popular ...

- ✓ Has brought billions of dollars in business to PR firms.
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- ✓ Firms ranked by 17 geographical regions in the U.S.
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- ✓ Articles on how to hire and use a PR firm by industry experts Jack O'Dwyer and Fraser Seitel.
- ✓ 7,000+ clients are cross-indexed. O'Dwyer's Directory of PR firms is the only place you can look up a company and determine its outside counsel.



Weill staffers at work amidst the agency's extensive vintage travel poster collection.

WEBER SHANDWICK

Continued from page 28

awards in every major category. In 2005, Rene Mack was honored by HSMIA with a lifetime achievement award for his contribution to the travel industry.

Clients benefit from the Travel practice's global perspective and emphasis on collaboration. In 2011, the practice led the global launch of the GHA Discovery rewards program, landing Global Hotel Alliance in the pages of *USA TODAY* and *The New York Times*, while also tapping the Weber Shandwick network and managing media relations efforts with offices in Hong Kong, London, Sydney, Berlin and Mumbai.

Online, the practice shapes the digital and social media presence for clients, creating original content, implementing campaigns including the HSMIA award-winning Bahama Fridays digital marketing campaign, and taking a leadership role in online community management.

Our clients includes some of the world's premiere destinations, airlines, hospitality companies, cruise lines, attractions, travel products and services, resorts and hotels, as well as online travel sites. We also have a strong team of crisis management and corporate positioning experts.

WEILL

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Mark Liebermann, Assistant Vice President

Founded 16 years ago, WEILL specializes in hospitality, travel and tourism. The firm's specialty is luxury hotels. According to company founder, Geoffrey Weill, his firm takes pride in the fact that only two of its staff ever worked in another PR firm. His preference is to choose staff with talent, charm, personality and a passion for travel — and then train them.

The transformation of the business since we started has been mind-boggling," Weill says; for instance, 16 years ago, we barely had an e-mail address, now 95% of our communication is e-mail."

In 2011, WEILL stresses the importance of concentrating on all PR disciplines. Each client — large or small — is covered by a minimum of three staff members. There are teams that specialize in designated media and key editors. And there is a team that concentrates on social media and blogs, including the company's own sites.

The WEILL offices in New York's Flatiron District boast an extraordinary collection of original travel posters; the entire gallery is accessible at www.geoffreyweill.com. ●

O'Dwyer Rankings Now Open Year-Round

To help clients shop for PR and wind up with legitimate firms, odwyerpr.com is opening its ranking process to PR firms throughout the year.

Public Relations Firms Rankings

Updated March 2011

2010 WORLDWIDE FEES OF INDEPENDENT FIRMS WITH MAJOR U.S. OPERATIONS

[listing] -- Listing for each firm in O'Dwyer's PR firms database

Firm	2010 Net Fees	Empl.	% Fee Change from 2009
1. Edelman, New York [listing]	\$521,969,675	3,635	+18.6
2. APCO Worldwide, Wash., DC [listing]	\$113,400,000	566	+13.1
3. Waggener Edstrom, Bellevue, WA	\$111,910,000	839	+5.9
4. Ruder Finn, New York [listing]	\$97,059,000	602	+8.8
5. Text 100 Global PR, San Francisco [listing]	\$46,700,000	451	-3.9
6. WCG, San Francisco	\$37,008,000	179	+37.6
7. MWW Group, East Rutherford, NJ [listing]	\$34,798,000	184	new
8. Qorvis Communications, DC [listing]	\$29,713,320	98	new
9. ICR, Norwalk, CT [listing]	\$26,514,621	87	+20.0
10. Schwartz Comms., Waltham, MA [listing]	\$25,210,803	179	+1.2
11. Regan Comms. Group, Boston [listing]	\$19,462,000	45	+6.0
12. Taylor, New York	\$19,300,000	100	+1.0
13. Padilla Speer Bearsley, Minneapolis	\$17,074,827	110	+12.0
14. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ [listing]	\$16,051,100	94	+32.0
15. Gibbs & Soell, New York [listing]	\$15,979,927	92	+5.0
16. Allison & Partners, San Francisco [listing]	\$15,509,135	93	+6.0
17. Cooney/Waters Group, New York [listing]	\$14,088,673	47	+14.1
18. French/West/Vaughan, Raleigh	\$13,597,663	74	+18.0
19. Zeno Group, New York [listing]	\$12,468,755	76	+24.0
20. RF Binder Partners, New York [listing]	\$12,310,000	75	+6.0
21. Hunter PR, New York [listing]	\$12,005,679	72	+16.5
22. Peppercom, New York	\$11,825,816	60	-5.6
23. Capstrat, Raleigh	\$11,800,000	88	+13.0
24. SW Public Relations, New York [listing]	\$11,393,178	69	+3.0
25. Atomic PR, San Francisco [listing]	\$11,112,250	75	+46.0

The current ranking of more than 150 firms (top 25 shown above) will remain unchanged but there will be a section on the site beneath the list that will include firms that have satisfied the O'Dwyer ranking rules — supporting fee and employee totals with income tax and W-3 forms and providing a current account list.

The entire counseling industry will benefit by having as large a database as possible of firms that have met these reporting requirements.

The bigger the database, the more accurate a picture that can be painted as to how the PR counseling industry is faring.

An "O'Dwyer Seal" will be provided to firms that document their revenues and staff and provide a public account list.

Log on to odwyerpr.com to download rankings instructions in PDF form.

O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

TOP TRAVEL AND TOURISM PR FIRMS

	Firm		2010 Net Fees
1.	Edelman	New York	\$16,288,715
2.	Ruder Finn	New York	10,009,000
3.	The Zimmerman Agency	Tallahassee	6,470,000
4.	Lou Hammond & Associates	New York	5,932,431
5.	Quinn & Co.	New York	2,680,016
6.	Development Counsellors Int'l	New York	2,507,128
7.	Allison & Partners	San Francisco	2,476,000
8.	Ypartnership	Orlando	1,435,209
9.	5W PR	New York	1,400,000
10.	French West Vaughan	Raleigh	1,233,116
11.	Zeno Group	New York	930,246
12.	BLAZE	Los Angeles	885,012
13.	Jackson Spalding	Atlanta	871,612
14.	Standing Partnership	St. Louis	782,458
15.	Lane PR	Portland, OR	765,767
16.	rbb PR	Coral Gables, FL	759,375
17.	CRT/tanaka	Richmond, VA	750,000
18.	Fahlgren Mortine	Columbus, OH	603,064
19.	Coyne PR	Parsippany, NJ	603,000
20.	Richmond PR	Seattle	557,464
21.	Qorvis Communications	Wash., D.C.	489,640
22.	CooperKatz + Co.	New York	489,024
23.	Black Twig Communications	St. Louis	471,600
24.	J Public Relations	San Diego	426,466
25.	Padilla Speer Beardsley	Minneapolis	378,311
26.	McNeely Pigott & Fox PR	Nashville	331,432
27.	MDi media group	Mobile, AL	316,602
28.	Linhart PR	Denver	215,368
29.	Singer Associates	San Francisco	200,117
30.	Michael A. Burns & Associates	Dallas	181,477
31.	Kohnstamm Communications	St. Paul	175,184
32.	Peritus	Louisville	158,116
33.	Watershed Comms.	Portland, OR	139,106
34.	Luckie Strategic PR	Birmingham, AL	120,000
35.	Gregory FCA	Ardmore, PA	100,000
36.	Ron Sachs Communications	Tallahassee	85,890
37.	Bridge Global Strategies	New York	80,869
38.	Shelton Group	Dallas	66,647
39.	Landis Communications	San Francisco	53,700
40.	Red Sky Public Relations	Boise	51,233
41.	Powell Group	Dallas	35,982
42.	Guthrie/Mayes & Associates	St. Louis	30,136
43.	Boardroom Communications	Plantation, FL	25,000
44.	GodwinGroup	Jackson, MS	22,776

Six rules for internal memos

By Fraser Seitel

As a Hewlett-Packard shareholder, I hope new CEO Leo Apotheker turns out to be the world's greatest business manager. But as an internal communicator, he's an idiot.



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

The new Chairman's predilection to display his ire on paper resulted in H-P's stock getting pummeled in June.

CEO Apotheker, in a "confidential" email sent to 10 senior H-P executives prior to its quarterly earnings announcement and investor conference call, warned of "another tough quarter ... (in

which) we must watch every penny and minimize all hiring."

Those are just the kind of words that sends Wall Street into a tailspin and neces-

sitates moving up earnings announcements and conference calls. (All of which happened after the H-P memo was published in its entirety by Bloomberg.)

Even worse, Apotheker's memo repeated what the CEO had just verbally transmitted to his top brass at an H-P Executive Council meeting. And to make matters worse, Apotheker went on CNBC to announce he would investigate the leakers!

Maybe that's the way they do things in your native Germany, Mr. Chairman, but this is America — land of leaks and skittish shareholders. So next time, stifle yourself and follow the following half dozen rules in writing — or not writing! — internal memos.

Rule #1 — Aim high

Memos are impersonal vehicles, inappropriate for supervisor-to-subordinate communication. A memo should be written to superiors; in the case of Mr. Apotheker, his board of directors or shareholders.

Apotheker's initial instinct to verbally communicate the bad news to his top aides in the privacy of a management forum was the right one.

Why he felt it necessary to underscore the

urgency of his words with a memo seems to suggest that he lacks the confidence that his top lieutenants could accurately retain the message and transmit it down the line.

Rule #2 — No bad news

Memos are not the place for "bad news." That should be done verbally. By contrast, memos are the place for gratitude and commendation, as well as rule changes and notices.

When Apotheker warns his colleagues that "the headcount plans we have are unaffordable, given the pressures on our business," he is announcing dire news without explanation.

Rule #3 — Confirm don't announce

Ditto, using a memo to "announce" anything invariably leads to problems. Examples: How are we to interpret the staffing announcement? What does it mean to job openings in the pipeline? What if we've already budgeted for new headcount?

It's one thing to "confirm" what has already been announced, but quite another to declare new policy via memo.

Rule #4 — No 'I'

There's no "I" in "team." But there is an "I" in "Idiot." Using "I" in a memo from the top sets up a dangerous division, particularly in a company seeking to become more efficient. It's as if the CEO sees the employees' task as separate from his own; him against them.

When Apotheker says, "I can't stress enough the need to set the right tone ..." the implication isn't exactly that "We're all in this together."

Rule #5 — Distribute to all

People don't like to get frozen out of memos. If my supervisor can see it, why can't I see it?

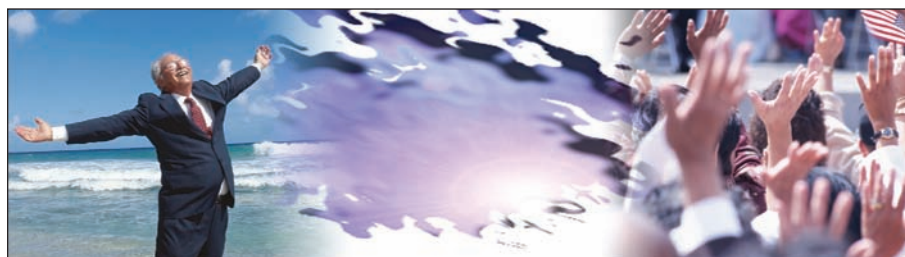
"For your eyes only" memos, like the H-P chairman's, are fraught with peril. What if somebody gets a copy by mistake? What if that "somebody" is so irritated that he or she leaks it in spite?

The best approach is to direct the memo to the entire staff. In this case, there's nothing wrong with reminding everyone that the environment is uncertain and that we have to pull together to sacrifice to make our numbers.

Rule #6 — Count to 1,000

The best memo is the memo unwritten. Any time you commit something to paper — or email, text message or Twitter — you are memorializing a missive that can get you into beaucoup trouble.

It's always better to take a breath, walk away, and then consider whether you have to put something in writing. ●



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Debt versus equity, revisited

By Richard Goldstein

My first column on this subject appeared May 2006. The subject of debt versus equity has not cooled down and is still on the IRS hot list.



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

It is not uncommon for a PR firm owner to advance money to his or her corporation. If the corporation is a "C" or regular corporation, negative tax consequences can result.

The question is whether the loan or advance is a capital contribution or a loan. The essential difference is that a loan is intended to be repaid, while a contribution to capital generally is not intended to be repaid. The problem arises if the debt is repaid. If the IRS views the debt repayment as a nonliquidating distribution paid by the corporation to the individual shareholder, there can be an unintended tax liability.

Corporate distribution

In order to determine if there is exposure that a loan repayment can be taxed to the shareholder(s), a three-layer analysis must be understood.

The first layer is that a distribution is taxable dividend to the extent of the corporation's earnings and profits, current or accumulated. The non tax professional can view earnings and profits as an amount similar to accounting retained earnings. It is not in fact accounting retained earnings, but for purposes of this column it will be viewed as such. Accordingly, assume that a corporation has current earnings of \$100,000 and the shareholder has loaned the corporation \$100,000. A loan repayment of \$100,000 can be viewed by the IRS as a nonliquidating distribution of \$100,000 that will be taxed as a dividend. Dividends from now through 2012 are taxed at a maximum rate of 15%. (Caution: dividends are taxed by states that have an income tax at the same rate as all other income.) Assume that instead of earn-

ing \$100,000, there is a loss of \$100,000. Since there are no current earnings and profits, a dividend will not result. However, if the cumulative prior year earnings and profits (known as accumulated earnings and profits) less the \$100,000 is positive, a dividend will result. For example, assume the accumulated earnings and profits net of the \$100,000 current year loss is a \$105,000, a dividend will still result.

The difference between a dividend and a liquidating distribution is that your tax basis (cost for example), cannot reduce the amount subject to tax.

Layer two is a tax-free return of capital to the extent of tax basis. Assume a PR firm has no current or accumulated earnings and profits. A loan payment is made that the IRS characterizes as other than a loan repayment. In this case it is treated similar to a loan repayment. After the earnings and profits have been exhausted, subsequent distributions reduce each shareholder's basis in his or her stock. In other words, the loan repayment is not considered a loan repayment but distributions up to each shareholder's stock basis and therefore is tax-free return of capital.

The third layer is simple. After a shareholder's basis is exhausted from layer two, any additional distributions are treated as capital gains. The gains are long-term if the stock has been held for over a year. Through 2012, the maximum individual federal income tax rate on long-term gains is only 15 percent.

Shareholder loan basis

In determining if a payment to a shareholder is a loan repayment as opposed to a potentially taxable distribution, the following factors are generally considered by the Tax Court:

1. Whether there is a written promise to repay evidenced by a note or other document.
2. Whether there is a stated principal repayment schedule or a balloon repayment date.
3. Whether principal payments are actually made on time.
4. Whether interest is charged.
5. Whether interest is actually paid on time.
6. Whether there is adequate security for the purported loan.

7. Whether the borrower has a reasonable prospect of being able to repay the loan.

8. Whether the parties conduct themselves as if the transaction is a loan.

The Knutsen-Rowell case

In the above case, John Rowell was an attorney who practiced law through a C corporation that he owned. His wife Kathleen was a television and screenwriter and collectibles dealer who conducted these activities through her wholly-owned C corporation called Knutsen-Rowell.

In the years in question, the Rowells withdrew for their personal use about \$742,000 from both corporations. They did not report these distributions on their personal income tax returns.

After being audited, the IRS took the position that about \$638,000 of the distributions was characterized as a dividend, \$102,000 as a long-term capital gain, and \$2,000 as a return of capital using the three layer analysis described above. The Rowells disagreed with the IRS and argued that the \$742,000 were loan repayments from the two corporations.

The Tax Court agreed with the IRS that the Rowells received taxable constructive dividends and not loan repayments by using the criteria set forth above and concluded that a bona fide debtor/creditor relationship did not exist.

Moral of the story

Unfortunately there can be tax consequences whenever cash or property passes between a closely-held corporation and its shareholders. Many business owners ignore this or do not receive sound tax advice. With transactions that are intended to be loans, the above eight factors must be taken into consideration; otherwise the IRS can get involved and recast the transactions. You must play the game similar to an unrelated party if you want to avoid tax on loan repayments.

The eight factors above are general in nature. It is important that you consult your attorney and/or tax advisor before any money is taken out of your corporation. Also, these rules can impact an S corporation (discussed next month). If you would like a more in debt discussion of the eight factors, please send me an email at rgoldstein@buchbinder.com and I will provide it to you. ●

Cite your sources: why plagiarism is never good policy

After publishing a blog post regarding a recent industry conference, one PR pro was surprised to find his content on another blog — only he wasn't listed as the author.

By Eric Fischgrund

In late May, I attended the PR News Facebook Conference in New York City. The content I gleaned from this event was informative, compelling and important to my particular trade. So much so, in fact, that the following morning it inspired me to publish a blog post regarding the event I titled “15 Must-Knows From The PRNews Facebook Conference,” where I offered a short list of informative items I took away from the event.

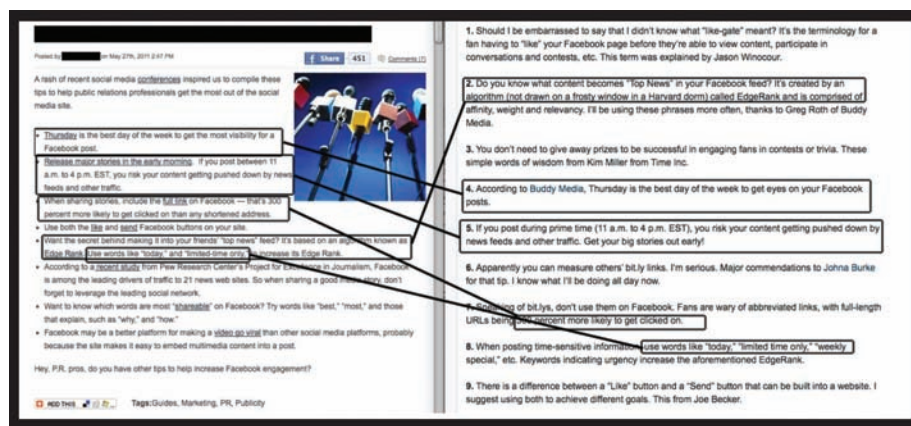
The post was well received, even despite my shoddy attempts at humor after I poked fun at the salmon at the event.

It later ended up appearing on Ragan.com, Buddy Media and on the PR News blog. Needless to say, I was thrilled to see my content spread among my PR industry brethren. While the information was good, it wasn't all my own. This is why I made the decision to cite each of the individuals I took notes from during the day-long event.

Less thrilling was the revelation I had several days later. While doing some basic research to tally metrics and gauge the article's reach, I stumbled across another, eerily-similar article on a popular Facebook-related website.

Take a look at the screenshot to the right. The post I found, published on May 27, is on the left. My article — the one on the right — was published two days prior.

Does this information look familiar? I thought so, as did several of my colleagues. And through some additional sleuthing, I found out the “writer” probably didn't even attend the conference.



Imitation, the worst form of flattery. On the right, Eric's Fischgrund's original post, which was published on the Beckerman PR blog (beckermanpr.com/blog) May 25. On the left, a similar post — albeit in reference to a different subject — appeared on May 27, where five of eight bullet-points reveal nearly verbatim information. The offending author's identity has been withheld to prevent further embarrassment.

Now, as any reporter will tell you, subjects such as Facebook are covered by many members of the media, so yes, our articles could be expected to be similar. However, the content for mine was gleaned from the PR News Facebook Conference. The subject of the latter writer's article pertained to Facebook and PR tips. What are the odds that five of the writer's eight bullets were this similar — and in some portions, word for word — to mine? Either this is a major coincidence and I need to find the nearest restaurant that serves crow, or my article's content was lifted and tweaked, then published elsewhere under another person's name.

Remember when you'd have to write that one-page paper on who shot Aaron Burr in the tenth grade? You'd copy something out of a book, change three words in every sentence, and then plan to turn it in?

From the “Great Aaron Burr Lesson” came several more — on how to correctly cite sources when leaning on someone else for their expertise — whether online, or offline. There are a variety of ways to do this appropriately when blogging, including the following:

• **Linking out.** As seen in my article published on the May 25, some of the content I posted was information and statistics that weren't a result of my own studies or conclusions. By failing to cite the content appropriately, I'm more or less claiming this knowledge as my own. This is not correct. To avoid

confusion, link out by hyperlinking the source of your information to the information within your post.

• **Shout Outs.** If you choose not to use links, just give a simple line of credit, such as “according to John Doe at DoePR” or “thanks to Jane Smith from Smith Communication.” By doing so, you are able to give a clear indication of who provided you that content. If you can provide a shout out and a link, even better.

• **Footnotes.** Everyone has seen them, most of us hate them. Who wants to read a sentence at the top of the page, then scroll to the bottom to see to whom it is attributed? Pain in the butt? Yes. Appropriate way to cite someone else's work? Another yes. While formatting and details may take time, this surefire way of crediting the original author is relied strongly upon in all areas of journalism and writing.

I wanted this editorial to focus on the importance of proper citation, rather than a malicious piece about someone who didn't do it correctly (hence, the offending party's identity has been withheld). Everyone makes mistakes, and it's better to learn and improve rather than dwell on them.

Writing is not easy, no matter who you are. Take your time, study hard and if you're going to borrow someone else's content, reference it. We PR people have a lot to say (at least I do). Let's do what we can to help each other learn and grow professionally without stepping on each other's toes. ●



Eric Fischgrund is a Senior Account Exec. at Beckerman in Hackensack, NJ.

Edelman hires Kundred, Clinton

Edelman has hired Curtis Kundred as President of its U.S. western region, succeeding Gail Becker, who held that post since 2003. Becker was named Western Chair and also will focus on development of Edelman's Latin America and Canada regions.



Curtis Kundred

Kundred served as Regional President at Fleishman-Hillard's eastern/western operations and Canadian chief. He joined Edelman July 1 and is based in San Francisco.

Edelman's western region generates 22% of domestic revenue from key clients such as Microsoft, HP, AMD, Volkswagen, Adobe and Charles Schwab & Co. It has offices in S.F., Silicon Valley, Sacramento, Los Angeles, Portland and Seattle.

John Clinton, who served as Grey Worldwide Canada Chief for nearly a decade, assumes the helm of Edelman Canada on August 17. He takes over for Heather Conway.

Based in Toronto, Clinton will be responsible for clients such as Labatt, RIM, Starbucks, Kraft, Unilever, and Pfizer, 160 staffers and offices in Montreal and Vancouver.

Clinton departed Grey in 2008 and joined Edelman from Transcontinental Media, where he was Senior VP/Digital Solutions and New Media.

Before Grey, he chaired J. Walter Thompson's Canadian operations and ran the global ad business for Kellogg's in New York.

In citing the convergence of PR, digital and advertising, Richard Edelman expects Clinton's background to "help expand our remit among marketing and communications officers." •

Levy gets extension at Publicis

Publicis Groupe shareholders today approved raising the age limit for members of its management board to 75 from 70, a move that enables its 69-year-old CEO, Maurice Levy, to continue

service beyond the Dec. 31 expiration of his current term.

It noted that Levy will continue to lead it through the transformation of the communications market through the digital age and expansion into emerging markets.



Maurice Levy

He will also have more time to plan for an orderly succession at the French ad/PR conglomerate.

Levy said Publicis is enjoying strong growth this year and its "robust financial situation enables us to look to the future with serenity."

In 2007, Publicis raised the mandatory retirement age to 70 from 65 to accommodate Levy. •

Edelman's Wonson to Weber Shandwick

Angela Wonson, a Senior VP in Edelman's national healthcare media practice, has moved to Weber Shandwick for the Executive VP slot in its health media shop.

Prior to Edelman, Wonson ran Calman Media, served as Chief Communications Officer for the Cleveland Clinic and handled media relations for MSNBC, CNBC and NBC News' Brian Williams.



Angela Wonson

Wonson reports to Barbara Box, President of Weber Shandwick's New York and Chicago healthcare units.

Box is confident that Wonson will be key in "building a unique healthcare media capability, across traditional and social channels, to further strengthen and differentiate the practice," according to her statement. •

McDonald's names new PR chief

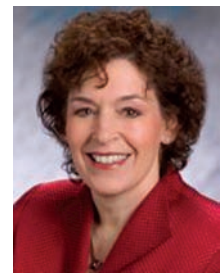
McDonald's Corporation has promoted its VP of Global External Communications to

fill the senior role vacated in January by Jack Daly, who died in early February after a battle with cancer.

The fast-food giant based in Oak Brook, Ill., said that 25-year veteran Bridget Coffing was named Senior VP of Corporate Relations, serving as Chief Communications Officer and overseeing all corporate PR functions from media relations to CSR and government relations.

Daly was 62 when he retired. He joined McDonald's in 1992 from its PR agency, GolinHarris. Coffing followed that same path through GH to McDonald's 25 years ago.

Coffing reports directly to CEO Jim Skinner. In a statement, he said Coffing will strengthen the company's efforts to "make a difference as a corporate citizen." •



Bridget Coffing

Horn makes S.F. leadership change

Horn Group has recruited Tim O'Keeffe from Hill & Knowlton to lead its San Francisco office as Managing Director.

He replaces Linda Clarke, who held the MD slot for just over a year and has left the tech shop.



Tim O'Keeffe

O'Keeffe, a Senior VP at H&K who started his career at HG 15 years ago, has handled PR accounts like Ford, Sony and Dolby. Previous stints included Fleishman-Hillard and Ruder Finn.

HG, led by CEO Sabrina Horn, has also added Orlando DeBruce (VP) from Zebra Technologies and Vitor Souza (director) of BitDefender in San Francisco.

HG, which is coming off a strong 2010 during which revenue grew 23 percent to \$7.5M, also has a New York office. Clients include Tibco, WhiteHat Security and Answers.com. •

Facebook friends Lockhart

Joe Lockhart, the former Clinton White House press secretary who founded Glover Park Group in 2001, is slated to join Facebook as VP of global communications.

Lockhart's appointment comes weeks after reports that the social networking giant was in discussions with former Obama press secretary Robert Gibbs. It also gives Facebook political and PR experience at a time of scrutiny over privacy issues and a rumored IPO for the company.

Lockhart, along with Al Gore staffers Michael Feldman and Carter Eswek, built Glover Park into a Democrat-heavy PR and public affairs shop with operations in New York and Washington, D.C., that handles corporate, political and issues work.

At Palo Alto-based Facebook, which he is slated to join July 15, he'll report to global VP of communications Elliott Schrage, an attorney who moved to Facebook from Google in 2008. He'll manage the company's corporate, policy and international communications teams.

Brandee Barker, a former Zeno Group VP, left Facebook after four years in November.

Lockhart, a former journalist, worked on the agency side at Bozell Sawyer Miller in the early '90s in between stints in politics with Dukakis-Bentsen in '88 and the Clinton-Gore reelection in '96. He was a producer and assignment editor/manager for SKY TV, CNN and ABC. ●

Rhee adds Democratic PR hand to reform push

Students First, the school reform group led by former D.C. schools chancellor Michelle Rhee, has brought in a former Obama campaign aide and veteran Democratic PR hand as VP of communications.

The hire of a Democrat, Hari Sevugan, comes as Rhee, the PR-savvy controversial advocate of overhauling public education, has drawn the ire of some Democrats and teachers' unions with her calls for overhauling public education, appearances with Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, and pledged support of school vouchers.

Sevugan is a former spokesman for President Obama's 2008 campaign and was communications director for Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.), in addition to working Dodd's flirtation with the presidency in '08.

Sevugan is as a former national press secretary for the Democratic National Committee. ●

Ex-Congressman Hill to APCO

Baron Hill, the five-term Indiana Democratic Congressman who was defeated by Republican Todd Young in November, is now senior VP in APCO Worldwide's government relations practice.

In his 10-year service on Capitol Hill, the Hoosier was a member of the Armed Services, Joint Economic, Science & Technology and Energy & Commerce Committees.

Earlier, he was a state Congressman for eight years and financial analyst at Merrill Lynch.



Hill, 57, expects his "lasting networks" that he built will benefit APCO clients that work the political landscape.

He also becomes a member of APCO's International Advisory Council. ●

Ex-Rep Obey joins Gephardt

Former House Appropriations Committee chairman Dave Obey has joined Gephardt Government Affairs. The Wisconsin Democratic Congressman, who was a close ally of Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, declined to seek re-election last year, saying he was "bone-tired" after 41 years of service that spanned nine presidencies.



Dave Obey

Obey also works as senior fellow at the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service, where he works with students to encourage engagement in governmental policy.

In Congress, Obey also chaired the Foreign Operations subcommittee and Labor, Health and Human Services subcommittee.

Former House Majority Leader and presidential candidate Dick Gephardt says Obey knows the ins and outs of government funding like no other. He admires Obey's "ability to negotiate, problem solve and develop legislative strategy." ●

Financial advisors tap D.C. pro

Chris Paulitz has moved to the Financial Services Institute in D.C. to direct communications and media relations for the trade group of broker-dealers and financial advisors.

Paulitz exits the Insured Retirement Institute, where he was senior VP, communications, marketing and public affairs, leading a re-branding of that group.

FSI president and CEO Dale Brown said the group wants to "raise the level" of its messaging and communications. It has been working the lobbying and PR beat in the wake of Wall Street reform and the Consumer Protection Act, and as the SEC considers a new fiduciary rule for all investment advice and the Dept. of Labor may expand its definition of financial advice.

Paulitz was a Republican Hill aide, including communications roles with Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Tex.) and George Voinovich (R-Ohio).

FSI is chaired by Bill Dwyer of LPL Financial. ●

Qatar World Cup PR bid denied award

Amid corruption allegations over Qatar's successful pitch for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the PR campaign that boosted the bid was denied a top award by voters for the Chartered Institute for PR's annual competition this week.

Vero Communications' effort for the Qatar 2022 bid committee was named a finalist for a CIPR Excellence Award in the global PR category, but lost to a Unilever campaign by Salt PR at the annual event June 1.

The country's victory was a surprise around the world and Vero's entry for the PR competition was titled "From Long Shot to 2022 World Cup Host."

Qatar in December beat the U.S., Australia, South Korea and Japan for the 2022 tournament.

The country has been besieged by allegations last month sparked when the *Sunday Times* of London reported on and gave evidence to the British Parliament that FIFA officials took \$1.5M bribes from Qatar in the competition for hosting duties for the world's most-watched sporting event. The allegations also claimed that payments were made to FIFA voters to sway the 2010 bid campaign.

London-based Vero Communications is led by Mike Lee, who headed PR for London's successful 2012 Olympic bid.

Lee was questioned earlier this month by the British House of Commons on the Qatar bid and said there was no wrongdoing.

Qatar denies reports

The Qatar Football Association issued a nearly 1,700 statement last month denying the allegations and criticizing the report.

"To have this achievement tarnished by completely unsubstantiated and false allegations and for those allegations to be propounded by the Parliament of the United Kingdom is something we find distressing, insulting and incomprehensible," said the QFA.

The episode has had a deleterious effect on the image of FIFA, which recently suspended two executive members after they allegedly tried to sell their votes for 2018 and 2022. One of the executives then released a memo from the soccer governing body's general secretary, Jerome Valcke, claiming Qatar "bought" the 2022 World Cup, although Valcke later said he was referring to the country's lavish spending on its bid.

The *New York Times*, in a front-page piece on June 2, said FIFA's longtime president was nevertheless re-elected this week after he ran unopposed. ●



Mike Lee

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.

Aloysius Butler & Clark (AB&C) Philadelphia LLC, Philadelphia, Pa., **registered May 24, 2011 for Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency**, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Washington, D.C., regarding engaging in advertising, direct marketing and public relations to influence the audiences toward a greater awareness of the Netherlands' advantages as a foreign investment locale. Services include research, planning, preparing and distributing promotional messages and tools.

Blank Rome Government Relations LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered June 8, 2011 for The Trust Company of the Marshall Islands, Inc. (TCMI)**, Majuro, Marshall Islands, regarding representing the principal in connection with outreach and education efforts directed at Congress to address the developments arising from the U.S. Coast Guard's release of "Volume 1" of the Joint Investigation Team's report of investigation into the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Dutko Worldwide, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered May 19, 2011 for Moroccan American Center for Policy**, Washington, D.C., regarding public relations activities aimed at impacting U.S. opinion leaders concerning U.S./Moroccan relations.

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.

Empire Consulting Group, Washington, D.C., **registered June 3, 2011 for Visa, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., regarding H.R. 1081, Consumers Payment System Protection Act; S. 968, Preventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity & Theft of Intellectual Property Act of 2011.

Harlow Government Relations LLC, McLean, Va., **registered June 13, 2011 for Go Daddy.com**, Washington, D.C., regarding piracy (intellectual property theft on the Internet), rogue Internet sites, privacy, spam, pharming, phishing, patent reform, Internet governance (ICANN and new gTLDs), and cybersecurity.

Mehlman Vogel Castagnetti, Inc., Washington, D.C., **registered June 7, 2011 for PayPal**, Washington, D.C., regarding implementation of Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform, cybersecurity, tax issues, and IRS oversight.

The Nickles Group, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered June 13, 2011 for Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI)**, New York, N.Y., regarding copyright issues.

Ulman Public Policy Federal Relations, Reston, Va., **registered May 26, 2011 for Retail Industry Leaders Association**, Arlington, Va., regarding advising on legislative and regulatory developments related to laws governing the workplace.

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Senior Account Executive/Account Supervisor/VP

A top-ranked financial communications firm seeks individuals possessing 4-12 years of corporate communications and media relations experience to fill available positions at all levels. Highly successful firm offers business model free of traditional agency administrative and hourly billing management, allowing team members to concentrate time on strategizing, pitching and advising clients to achieve PR goals. Dynamic agency growth ensures continual opportunity to learn and grow by working in diverse industries including clean tech, financial services, consumer, defense, technology and more; and on different assignments, including IPOs, M&A, crises, proxy contests and other transactions.

Specific skills sought include:

- Strong and active media relations skills (B2B and financial media)
- pitching/placement to national and trade media
- good base of contacts
- media strategy
- Strong writing ability
- releases
- pitches
- prep docs
- Experience prepping spokespeople
- Ability to handle multiple diverse accounts
- Experience working with publicly-traded companies a plus
- Outgoing, proactive and ambitious personality

Compensation is commensurate with experience and competitive (with significant bonus program), includes medical and 401K. Positions available in New York City and Connecticut offices.

Positions available immediately. Interested candidates please email to: prjobs@icrinc.com and list position in subject line.

Vice President, Cooney/Waters Group

Cooney/Waters Group is a mid-sized firm headquartered in New York City that provides the full range of public relations and public affairs services to health care, pharmaceutical and biotechnology enterprises in the non-profit, government, academic and industrial sectors throughout the world. Cooney/Waters has a culture of honesty, hard work, collegiality and respect.

This Vice President position is responsible for managing day-to-day activities for a high-profile, fast-paced pharmaceutical account that encompasses a broad spectrum of PR activities, including third-party collaborations, un-branded awareness initiatives and branded product support. Previous experience in epilepsy and/or rheumatology (e.g., product support, advocacy relations, media) is a plus.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Direct strategy and provide counsel to clients.
- Develop plans and budgets - from research and creative ideas to writing program and budgets.
- Supervise client activities and agency account team(s) from strategic vision to tactical execution, details and account administration.
- Manage profitability and financial aspects of accounts.
- Identify and develop opportunities for growth of existing and new accounts.
- Manage and develop account staff; monitor staff development and identify needs and opportunities for training/experience.

Ideal Candidate:

6+ years of public relations agency or combination of agency plus in-house pharmaceutical/corporate or non-profit healthcare communications experience. Experience with national and local market PR campaign management, media relations, scientific data meetings and data announcements, product launches, familiarity with the FDA approvals and advisory committee meetings. Financial management of budgets \$500,000+. Must be fast learner and motivated for success and growth of self, team and accounts.

Senior Account Executive/Account Supervisor/VP

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Requirements include and are not limited to:

- Solid computer skills
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- Bachelors Degree
- Strong background in corporate public relations, journalism and/or finance
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- Superior presentation and written communication skills
- Only applicants with 3-5 years relevant CORPORATE and/or HEALTHCARE PUBLIC RELATIONS experience will be considered.

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info@miltonpr.com; www.miltonpr.com
Consumer, financial, tech PR.
Employees: 12. Founded: 1972.

Agency Statement: Media-oriented Milton PR will give you an extra set of eyes and ears on your competitive environment and win you important recognition in the key media that will reach your customers. Our staffers are in daily contact with a host of general and trade media reporters, checking on word-of-mouth about our clients and their products and getting advance word of opinion-forming articles and features in media.

We'll bring you a steady stream of ideas to increase the visibility of your company and at low cost compared to print and broadcast advertising. We will bring you an integrated program that will use all forms of communications. You'll find reporters consider us to be a dependable source of information and help and that they rely on us to bring them good stories.

We'll help you to put your newsworthy material in a form that will get their attention. Our key staffers have decades of experience in our three specialty areas--consumer, financial and technology.

Give us a chance to visit you and come up with some sample ideas for your business at no charge. Milton PR Strategies operates both nationally and internationally through membership in a worldwide network of major PR firms.

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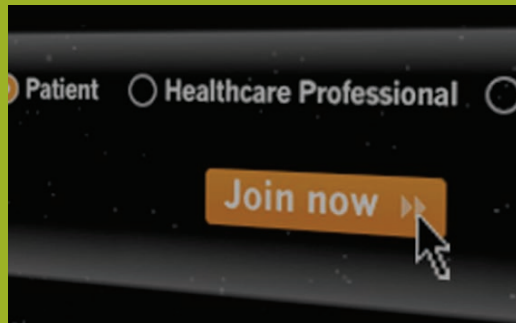


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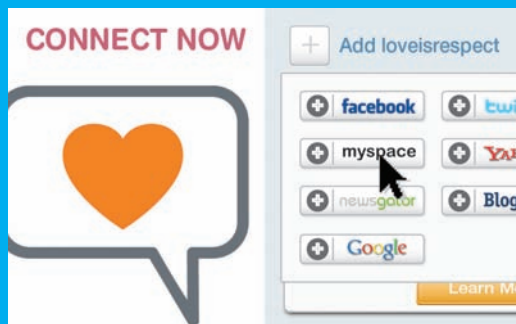
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