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July 2016 | Vol. 30 No. 7

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Millennials possess an outright antipathy toward brands.

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April: Broadcast & Social Media

May: PR Firm Rankings

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Navigating the new populism

Anger, or more specifically, a swelling tide of resentment against the status quo, has been a central, reoccurring sociopolitical theme in the western world for the last year. Populism's rise in the U.S. and Europe, similarities between Donald Trump's unstoppable ascension to presumptive Republican presidential nominee and Britain's surprising June referendum vote to leave the European Union, have been stated countless times in editorials in the last several weeks. It's an apropos comparison, but what hasn't been mentioned is how we never seem to address the reason why these people are so upset in the first place. We seem only interested in drawing parallels between the effects of their anger, while willfully ignoring the causes. Maybe that's because we don't understand where they're coming from.

At times it reads like a dystopian novel: the narcissistic scion of a real estate tycoon runs for President, and along the way discovers that the more racist, the more misogynistic, the more cartoonishly idiotic he sounds, the more popular he grows in the polls, because, as it turns out, the zeitgeist is now so proudly ignorant his toxic beliefs can't find a bottom. A year later, the Trump phenomenon still has the media and millions around the world scratching their heads, and it's clear that many just don't get it. Trump has galvanized an angry working-class electorate who, for decades, has witnessed stagnant wages and dwindling blue collar jobs, in a country where the average worker now makes \$700 less a year than he did more than forty years ago. They've received constant lip-service from a GOP establishment who courts them for votes yet refuses to sign bills protecting veterans or 9/11 first-responders, all while spending lavishly on wars, doling out tax breaks for corporations earning record profits and mandating taxpayer-funded bailouts of banks as homeowners facing foreclosure are left with no recourse. Meanwhile, a spate of terrorist attacks at home and abroad has made the threat of the Islamic State a top policy concern, but we're not allowed to call it that, so they feel our efforts to effectively combat terrorism have been stifled by a culture of political correctness in an age where aging white men have lost their top rung on the ladder. Is it any wonder why our establishment candidates didn't get more votes?

Many have found it unfathomable that supporters of outgoing antiestablishment leftist candidate Bernie Sanders would cross party lines and back Trump. Few seem to remember that this is exactly what happened during the 1968 election, when anti-war Democratic candidate Eugene McCarthy lost his bid for nominee after late-coming VP Hubert Humphrey was awarded a majority of delegates at the Democratic National Convention. When segregationist George Wallace entered the race as the Independent Party candidate, he filled the antiestablishment vacuum even though he was as far opposite on the political spectrum as one could get from McCarthy, and Wallace's presence in the race pulled enough votes away from Humphrey that the subsequent attrition handed Nixon the election by the slimmest of margins. For some, an identification of outsider status supersedes party affiliation.

The story is eerily similar on the other side of the pond. Mostly white, mostly older, mostly working-class Brits living primarily in areas of England and Wales where industry jobs disappeared years ago were rallied by a conservative political minority to direct their years-long resentment against not only national party leaders but also EU ministers, whose allegedly undemocratic, prohibitive trade policies and austerity measures have hampered economic growth and wrested governmental control away from Britain to Brussels. The antiestablishment Brexit supporters seem indifferent to the long-lasting and severe economic implications Europe's second largest economy leaving the bloc will have, and once again, the world at large remains incredulous at this, wondering how so many could possibly vote against their own interests. Or at least that's the line we tell ourselves.

We have a habit of analyzing others' behaviors within the framework of our own experiences and preconceptions. The Internet has made this even easier: we condense nuanced, complex issues into easy-to-swallow slogans, and the resulting consensus is often merely a product of manufactured opinion, where we coopt the voice of the establishment and dismiss anyone who doesn't share our viewpoints as naive or stupid. I think this is a convenient deflection.

Trivializing others' concerns is a cynical response that does nothing to address the problem. In fact, it has the effect of not only confirming the objections of the people making them, but also ignores the original source of their ire. There's no question that what's happening in the U.S. and Britain can be attributed in large part to a rash of xenophobia, but it's also certainly easier for us to dismiss Trump's popularity and the Brexit's success as merely the result of idiotic, racist, semiliterate brutes than it is for us to cede that some of their grievances may have some legitimacy, or at the least, that leading comfortable lives often has the unintended effect of making other people's problems seem invisible. Donald Trump and Britain's exit from the European Union are not the solution, but let's not mistake bad decisions for the reasons people are making them. Given where the world is headed, it might be a good idea to pay attention to the latter. ○

—Jon Gingerich

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

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Brands aren't attracting Millennials

Millennials exhibit a lack of enthusiasm toward brands, according to a report, and are more likely than other generations to exhibit outright antipathy toward them.

By Jon Gingerich

Millennials exhibit particularly low levels of attachment to brands, according to a new report by opinion poll giant Gallup that sought to uncover and analyze the habits of Americans born between 1980 and 1996.

Only one in four Millennials — 25 percent — express an emotional or psychological attachment to a brand, product or company, according to Gallup's 150-page report, "How Millennials Want to Work and Live." By contrast, older generations such as Generation X and Baby Boomers exhibit higher levels of brand advocacy, gauging 28 percent and 33 percent, respectively.

Millennials' lack of brand enthusiasm appears pervasive across industries. Only 31 percent of Millennial consumers expressed engagement with the banking sector, for example, and when it comes to hospitality, only 20 percent admitted an affinity for this industry. Only 12 percent expressed engagement with airline companies.

Not only do Millennial consumers appear to lack emotional and psychological attachment to brands, they're also more likely than any other generation to exhibit outright antipathy toward them. The study found, for example, that 46 percent of Millennials expressed disengagement with the airline industry, and 27 percent expressed active disengagement with the insurance industry.

Spending among Millennials accounts for 28 percent of all daily, per-person consumer spending in the U.S., according to Gallup. While spending has declined among all Americans since 2008, with Millennials that downturn has been especially precipitous, as members of this generation spend an average amount of \$13 less per day than those who belonged to the same age group in 2008. Strangely enough, the Gallup study also found that Millennials are 13 percent more likely to make impulse purchases than other generations.

Millennials have long been characterized

as a generation seeking purpose over a paycheck. Perhaps as a result of this ethos, the Gallup report suggests that Millennials could be the generation least likely to experience fulfillment in the workforce. Only 29 percent of Millennials said they consider themselves emotionally or behaviorally connected with their jobs, 55 percent expressed indifference to them and 16 percent characterized an active disengagement — in other words, a dislike — toward the company or organization with whom they are employed. A majority — 60 percent — said they are open to new job opportunities, and 21 percent reported changing jobs within the last year.

It comes as no surprise that Millennials are the most wired generation: nearly three-quarters — 71 percent — say they get their news via the Internet, and around the same number — seven in 10 — admitted using the Internet to compare product prices. A vast majority — 85 percent — say they now access the Internet via mobile devices, and an overwhelming 93 percent say they use social media to connect with others.

Millennials' penchant for digital interaction implies that members of this generation are more likely to exhibit engagement when a product or service provides digital offerings. Indeed, 84 percent of Millennials surveyed said their relationship with their bank is primarily digital, far higher than any other generation polled. ○



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Media news brief

Online publishing now employs more than newspapers

More Americans now work for online-only publishing outlets than newspapers, according to a recent report by Nieman Journalism Lab that culled 26 years of monthly employment data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

As of March 2016, Internet-only publishing and broadcasting jobs now employ about 198,000, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. By contrast, the newspaper publishing industry now accounts for a current workforce of about 183,000. That industry peaked in June 1990, when there were nearly 458,000 jobs, and has dropped nearly 60 percent since.

Nieman points out that employment at online-only outlets appears to have first eclipsed traditional newspaper publishing jobs in October 2015. Nieman also notes that while online-only jobs began to gain momentum in the late 90s to account for about 112,000 jobs by 2000, the dot-com crash cut that workforce number in half. Digital publishing gained its strongest footing in wake of the 2008 financial crisis, Nieman reports, and the number of jobs in that field has doubled since.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, another news industry similarly hurt by the Internet is radio broadcasting, where employment has declined by about 27 percent since 1990.

Facebook named top site for B2B marketers

Facebook is becoming the number-one source for B2B marketers when it comes to finding information about vendors, according to a report that gauged the ways marketing decision-makers use different social channels.

By Jon Gingerich

A new report conducted by New York-based communications agency Hotwire PR and technology market research provider Vanson Bourne shows that Facebook is quickly becoming the go-to social channel for B2B marketers when it comes to finding information about vendors.

The “Changing Face of Influence” report gauged the habits, preferred channels and ways in which marketing decision-makers are now consulting varying forms of media when making a purchasing decision.

While it may be widely assumed that LinkedIn is the preferred source for B2B marketers when seeking vendor information, the report found that one in four (24 percent) of respondents now say Facebook is their top destination when it comes to researching information on a purchasing

decision-makers said they now use Facebook 18 days a month for this purpose, compared to 13 days for LinkedIn.

However, LinkedIn and Twitter remain the top channels for actual digital B2B marketing, revealing a divide that appears to exist between how Facebook is used by marketers themselves and how they envision its use by others. While it's clear that more in the B2B marketing community are embracing Facebook for finding information about vendors and will continue to do so in the future, nearly a third — 30 percent — of respondents said they don't plan to use Facebook in their own B2B marketing.

The report also found that despite declarations to the contrary, traditional media appears to be going strong in the B2B marketing realm. An overwhelming majority — 87 percent — said traditional media and social media remain equally important as reference points and sources of information in the purchasing process. The report found, however, that respondents were more likely to engage with newer outlets that have a

digital-only presence, with *Business Insider* and the *Huffington Post* being the two most widely-read publications among marketers, and the former being the most consulted publication throughout the buying process.

While 89 percent admitted it's now easier than ever to find relevant information when they're researching a potential purchase, many said they still lack information when it comes to making a purchasing decision. Nearly half of respondents said they now proactively seek out case studies when researching vendors, but more than a third — 37 percent — said they find it difficult to find relevant information when they're at the final stage of the buying process, and 50 percent said they'd like to see more impartial and independent commentary issued by vendors to assist them with the purchasing process.

The “Changing Face of Influence” report surveyed 1,000 marketing and IT decision-making pros between March and April who reside in the US, UK, Germany, Spain, France, Australia and New Zealand. ○

Media news brief

Newsstand losses level off

The steady, years-long decline in newsstand magazine sales appears to have hit a period of relative stasis, according to new findings by magazine industry group MagNet.

North American magazine publishers sold nearly 102 million newsstand units during 2016's first quarter, representing a 5.1 percent slip in year-over-year revenue from the same period in 2015. While sales are still declining, those losses actually reveal a marked improvement from the 7.6 percent revenue declines North American publishers experienced during 2015's fourth quarter and the 10.1 percent losses the industry faced during that year's third quarter.

Larger publishers appeared to take the brunt of the latest losses, with the top ten publishers revealing quarterly declines of 7.4 percent, compared to the 25 publishers (-5.2 percent) and the top 50 and 100 publishers (both -4.6 percent). Still, the top 50 magazine titles, which represent 43 percent of total newsstand magazine sales, saw sales decline by an average of only 7.8 percent, an improvement from the 10.7 percent decline experienced during the fourth quarter of 2015.

MagNet noted that higher cover prices are at least somewhat responsible for staving off the heavy losses felt in previous quarters: the number of units sold in the last year actually declined by 9.7 percent, according to MagNet data, but higher average cover prices per unit — \$5.60, up from \$5.32 in the first quarter of 2015 — somewhat mitigated those losses. Leading the charge were special issues, which now sell with an average price of \$6.95, or \$1.35 more than magazines' average cover price.

Magazines specializing in celebrity, women's, home/garden, health/fitness, crafts, sports, teen/children and business/finance continued to perform poorly, while titles focusing on science, recreation, lifestyle and general interest picked up in the first quarter of 2016.

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Turning the tides with topmost trends

The prospect of trend-spotting provides a strategic framework for innovation for both publicists and clients.

By Jennifer Hawkins

We all know in agency life that campaigns come and go, clients alter their scope of work on a whim, and journalists, well they always modify our beloved press releases to their advantage. What we become best at as PR pros is change and flexibility. The ability to be one step ahead and skate backwards while tweeting. Our clients look to us to be flexible and to change course when need be. To be ahead of the trend, if not creating the trend.

This ability to spot change and be flexible adapters is an asset we use as we create our clever campaigns. Keeping up with the modes of communication alone when reaching out to journalists requires a full-court team (Snail mail! Faxes! Phone calls! Emails! Tweets!), and with the emergence of Instagramers and bloggers as “media targets,” publicists must constantly be one step ahead of the changing media landscape in order to do our jobs well. But savvy PR pros know that change and evolution can also be our best ally. Change is the driving force behind trends and they can be the secret weapon for keeping our clients in the news — not to mention ahead of the curve in their industries — and for enticing media to look to us as expert resources for insight on what’s hot and what’s next.

Trends have been “getting ink” and dominating headlines since pamphlets were first passed on horseback during the American Revolution. In 1774, the *Virginia Gazette* was one of the first newspapers to record fashion trends regarding Colonial dress codes, documenting everything from powdered hair pieces to hoop skirts and knee breeches, to how slaves mended, patched and embellished their clothing to create an individual style. Despite hundreds of years — not to mention the hundreds of media outlets that have come and gone since — trends have prevailed as one of the most frequently covered topics by media. Take for example *The Wall Street Journal*, where recent headlines include everything from “A Furniture Trend that Will Rope You In” to “Broccoli Rabe is Trying to be the Next Kale” and “Are High-Tech Hotels Alluring — or Alienating?” So while virtually everything has changed since the *Virginia Gazette*’s debut, it’s safe to say that the concept of reporting on fashions and societal inclinations has remained relevant content.

Trends by their very nature are driven by the human need for “new” — the vari-

ations in human interest, in conversation, communication, and in global news. Consider the current trend of luxury experiential travel — where affluent travelers are shifting away from simple leisure and seeking more authentic, hands-on memory-driven adventures. Our fabulously creative Napa Valley client knows travelers don’t just want to order an expensive bottle of wine to accompany their gourmet meal, they want to visit the vineyard, pick the grapes, cultivate wine and bottle it themselves. Nothing tastes sweeter than sipping the fruits of your labor. This trend may seem fleeting, but it was inspired by a variety of complex cultural and socio-political issues as consumers are aspiring to connect to a local destination and understand where their food and beverages come from, wanting to become familiar with indigenous customs, and ultimately demanding that their vacations provide genuine, authentic experiences.

Understanding and recognizing where society’s interests are piquing, it’s clear that any publicist worth their salary, is a voracious media follower. Devouring news from every source — pop culture publications and hard news channels, influencer posts and sponsored content from big brands. The simple notion of reading anything and all, yet editing and curating what we digest is one of the gifts a great PR pro possesses. It is the 360-degree perspective — news, pop culture, politics, economics — that collides to create an overlap in interest and ultimately groundswell trend. Being a skilled trend-spotter also lends itself to cleverly packaging them and turning them into press for clients. That way they don’t have to be the news, they just have to be in the news.

In being global experts, we can make educated recommendations on what will hook a potential new guest or story-searching journalist. For example, informed of the rise of beer tourism in Vermont, and at a time when craft beer was still just an under-the-radar niche beloved by a tight-knit group of “beer geeks,” our team identified an opportunity for our new boutique hotel client in Burlington, VT. After being introduced to one of the front desk agents, we quickly learned about his personal passion for this rising trend, and recommended leveraging him to create Vermont’s first and only “Beer Concierge.” What initially started as an informal guest resource for local brewery recommendations evolved into an entire campaign and identity for

the property as it created a dedicated hotel package and local tour around the concept. The Beer Concierge program has resulted in more than 170 million print and digital media impressions ranging from *The New York Times*, *Food & Wine*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Forbes.com*. The property also generated over \$25,000 in revenue throughout the campaign. This was a true testament to the fact that trends drive media awareness and income.

While the evolution of some trends is organic, there is an overarching strategy behind trend-spotting. In addition to daily client counsel, our dedicated team also has a streamlined plan to help our clients prepare for trends



Jennifer Hawkins

throughout the year. We brainstorm and outline relevant trend-driven content containing specific client examples and how to pitch media accordingly. This allows us to not only share forthcoming trends with our clients, but ensure that they’re included and therefore part of the trend stories that will permeate the media — from interactive Olympic programming that helps guests celebrate the summer games to highlighting Presidential stays at historic properties ensuring inclusion in Presidential election coverage.

Considering trend-spotting as part of our scope-of-work with every single client is extremely important. It benefits our clients because it results in quality media coverage that positions them as trendsetters, ultimately driving awareness and in many cases business. At the same time, it helps us publicists because we’re able to package our variety of travel clients’ news as ready-made trend stories to media and serve as an invaluable and trusted resource to journalists.

Jennifer Hawkins is Founder and President of Hawkins International Public Relations. ○

PR news brief

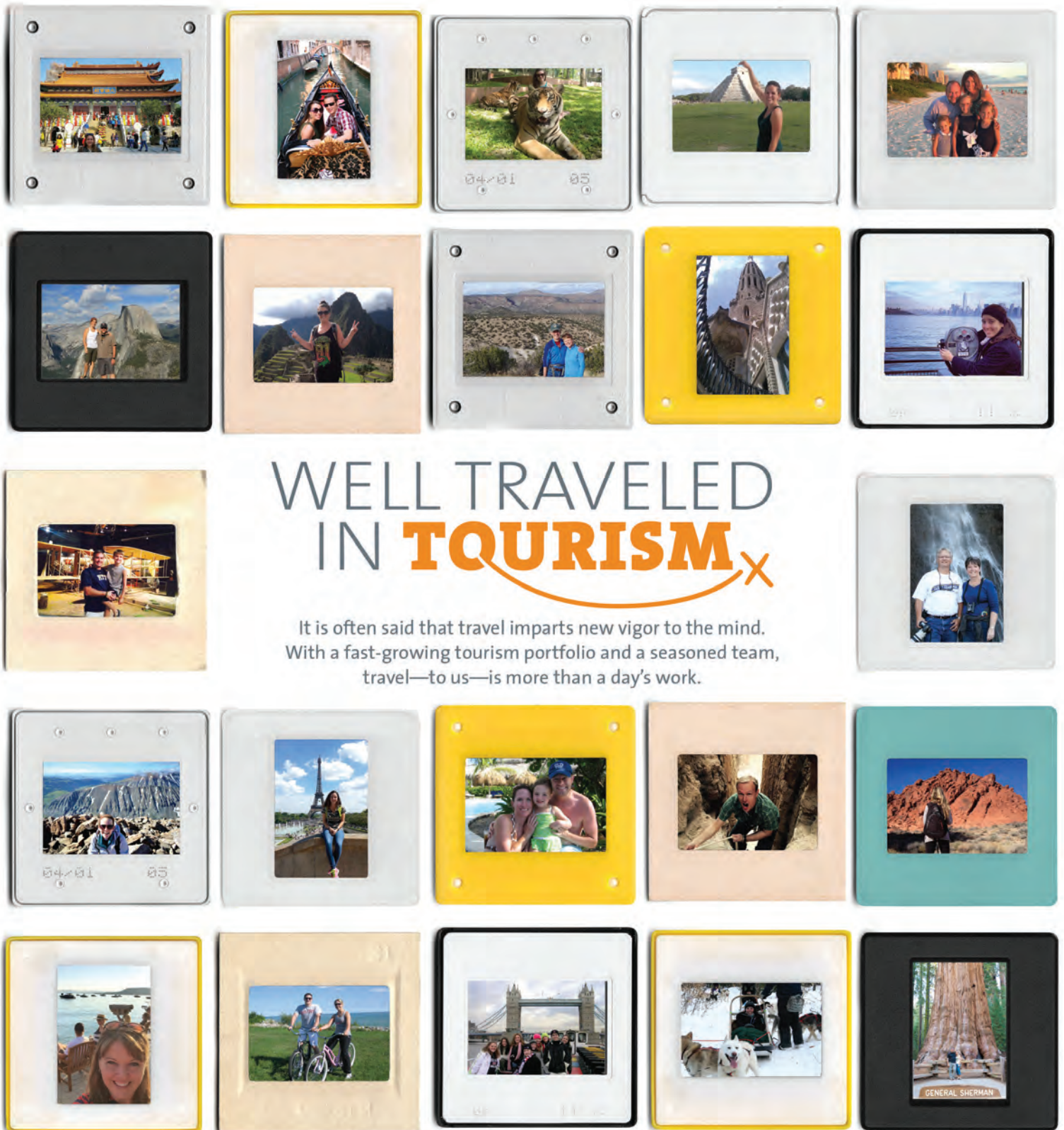
Spong, Carmichael Lynch sweeten PR for Truvia

Sugar substitute Truvia has engaged Spong and Carmichael Lynch for PR and ad work, following a competitive pitch.

The account covers PR, social engagement, digital content, brand planning and advertising. Truvia global marketing A.J. Aumock said the two agencies, owned by Interpublic, offered a “seamless integration and truly differentiating creative campaign ideas.”

The pitch centered on Truvia Nectar, a liquid sweetener combining honey, stevia and sugar.

Julie Batliner, President of Spong, said the firm will “tell the story of how sweetness with fewer calories can be enjoyed.”



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How travel brands are connecting with Millennials

Social Media has become a powerful tool for travel brands to engage audiences and reach out to the new generation's base of tourism enthusiasts.

By Nadia Duwaik

No matter what age, traveling anywhere is no easy or cheap endeavor. Yet, a recent study by Resonance Report suggests that America's 80 million Millennials are spending more money on traveling than any other generation. It's estimated that by 2017, Millennials will spend more than \$200 billion a year on travel, leaving the baby boomer generation in the dust.

This leaves many traditional brands wondering how to tap into this new generation of spenders and how to market to them.

It's no secret that social media is taking the world by storm. It seems like everyone is on one platform or another, and according to Nielsen, social media platforms account for around 50 percent of all time spent online. It's more than apparent that old and new generations alike are partaking in their fair share of social media time.

Social media isn't just used for the occasional life update or selfie; it's now being used as a buying and influence tool for brands and consumers alike. With Nielsen reporting that 75 percent of consumers rely on social media to inform purchase decisions, it's no surprise that marketers are taking full advantage of this new trend, especially when it comes to traveling. According to a report put together by Facebook and Deloitte after family and friends, social media is the most popular way travelers find trip ideas.

Below are a few ways travel brands are leveraging the social sphere to connect with a new generation:

Travel brands are now using social media to engage their current audience and reach new consumer bases. One way brands use their own social media platforms for outreach is by hosting their own giveaway or contest. The rules of the promotion may be as simple as commenting on a particular post, which helps boost their engagement. Another way is to have followers tag friends and colleagues, this increases brand awareness and generates new followers.

Through these promotions, consumers are oftentimes requested to use a specific hashtag and by doing so, the photo or video content they are required to submit to enter creates a positive ripple effect for the brand. For example, the EVA Airlines #EVAWorldTour promotion was able to not only raise awareness for the Star Alliance airline but also generated direct ticket sales via a click to book mobile promotion and retargeting through social media advertising, executed simultaneously.

Social media has now made it easier than ever to turn everyday consumers to brand

ambassadors and changing how they are rewarding consumers for their loyalty.

Jet Blue, for example, has their Go Places app, which rewards customers for checking-in at Jet Blue Terminals on Facebook. Customers are able to unlock reward points for real rewards. Not only is this a great brand awareness tactic, but is also an incentive to keep consumers coming back, which helps builds a loyal fan base as well.

Not all social media users are created equal in terms of value to marketers. Some carry a lot more resonance and reach a massive audience who are willing to listen to whatever it is they are selling. These users are called influencers and the practice of utilizing these people to promote your brand or service is what we like to call influencer marketing.

Influencer marketing is one of the most rewarding tactics brands can use to leverage and really hone into a variety of social media platforms. Utilizing influencers is a great way to engagement, reach and newfound awareness towards established brands.

Disney recently launched awareness about their new "Adventures by Disney", where families travel to select destinations with a guide and group. The family oriented company worked influencers and the media to help promote the new family travel program.

Especially valuable to the travel industry are the influencers who seem to be living a globetrotting life. These influencers make it easy to connect travel brands with their ideal consumer base. Usually flooded with images of cascading waterfalls, breathtaking views and impressive monuments, these Instagram accounts provide the ideal visual content travel brands are looking to partner with.

The Royal Norwegian Consulate General wanted to promote tourism in specific cities in Norway while helping promote Norwegian architecture and design in the U.S. so Marketing Maven connected them with ABC's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition's Ty Pennington for a Norwegian Design Tour to be promoted via traditional media and social media. This use of an influencer helped to highlight Norwegian tourist attractions, hotels, airlines and restaurants, along with Norwegian furniture designers looking to gain awareness in the U.S. This digital influencer tourism campaign was amplified with national TV, radio and newspaper interviews in Norway, along with an Access Hollywood TV interview upon his return to the U.S.

Travel marketers will often sponsor some of these adventures, providing the brand with a new audience for brand awareness and po-

tentially new visual content that can be repurposed in their own marketing collateral. Travel conventions like the Travel and Adventure Show are ideal places to brainstorm ideas about how to integrate influencers into social media marketing campaigns or tourism initiatives.

In this fast-moving generation, there's nothing like instant gratification, especially when it comes to engaging with Millennials. Traditionally having to wait for a customer service representative to assist you via phone or anticipating an email to be answered, consumers are now taking their concerns and questions to social media.



Nadia Duwaik

Travel brands are now utilizing their social media platforms as a way to connect with their consumers and provide real-time feedback, customer service and updates. If a consumer has a concern or questions, members of the brand's social media team can take it upon themselves to answer questions or at the very least address the consumer and expedite their inquiry. For example, EVA Air recently won the "Leisure Lifestyle Award for Outstanding Customer Service" from *Global Traveler* magazine. This shows the brand is being proactive to consumer feedback in a timely fashion, garnering consumer loyalty and trust.

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines is another airline with impeccable customer service via social media channels. The Dutch airline updates their response time every hour, which offers transparency in showing the amount of time it takes for them to answer questions and concerns, much like a notification that passengers receive for flight information.

The bar has been set high for customer service in the travel and hospitality industries.

By now, it should be no surprise that in order to keep up with the fast moving and on-the-go new generation, all brands, not just travel, need to adapt to the digital era. The visual appeal of social media platforms makes it especially easy for travel brands to capitalize on. Knowing how to leverage not only your own brand's social media platforms but those of influencers and consumers alike is vital to building a strong and reputable online presence with the Millennial audience, some of today's biggest spenders in travel.

Nadia Duwaik leads Marketing Maven's influencer marketing practice and works with Marketing Maven's travel clients. ○

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Destination marketing presents PR opportunity

Destination marketers weigh in on brand leadership and the vast new PR opportunities presented by destination brand development.

By Marty McDonald and Angela Berardino

Two years ago, in this same *O'Dwyer's* travel issue, we dug into a few of the emerging trends in travel PR. We discussed the fact that travel PR leaders everywhere were poised to take advantage of the increasing gray space among paid, earned and owned content by refusing to be relegated to the role of publicist.

Have PR leaders stepped up to this challenge to drive destination brand development? Fahlgren Mortine and Turner surveyed a cross-section of domestic destination marketing organizations to gauge our collective progress and learn more about how the game continues to change for marketers today.

The results confirm that while the same core trends and challenges remain, communications leaders are getting comfortable in the driver's seat.

Brands as publishers

With the ever-changing — and often-shrinking — traditional media landscape, brands can no longer rely on someone else's distribution channels. Brands must go direct, and that means budgeting for both staff and asset production.

With a honed content strategy and a commitment to producing relevant branded content, we're seeing more and more DMOs relieve some of their dependence on the media by stepping into the publisher space.

"The downsizing of news staffs and syndication of content from parent companies like Gannett makes securing hits in our drive markets challenging," said Emily Lauer, Senior Dir. of PR/Communications for Destination Cleveland.

The paid/earned/owned gray space

According to Chris Mickey, Media and PR Manager for Wyoming Office of Tourism, navigating the blurred lines between paid, earned and owned is still a major challenge.

"With the ever-increasing shift to online resources and social media, we are constantly adjusting to make sure everything we do has an online component. Making heads or tails of online publications can be exhausting on resources, but we're leading the charge for vetting all content producers across the program," he said.

In addition to unclear boundaries and roles, the speed of change is causing PR leaders to act fast and think differently about their programs.

"Not only are the platforms all changing at once, but we're focused on shifting to

mobile consumption more than ever," said Andrea Czopp, Comms. Manager at Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation.

The great reporting overhaul

While the majority of PR leaders agree that somewhere, a unicorn dies every time we report Ad Value Equivalency, there's still reluctance to abandon this metric because it's based in real dollars, which resonates with stakeholders. Many practitioners today are evolving on a dual track — reporting AVEs in the spirit of benchmarking, but emphasizing true value through qualitative discussion and education about brand-building quality, reach, engagement, positivity and many other, more meaningful factors.

According to Andrea Mensink, Director of Comms. and Marketing for the Columbia, S.C. CVB, "Our most important metrics include alignment with the brand and consumer profile, positive tone, and the degree to which the coverage inspires travel. We are starting to report on social engagement factors, but just anecdotally at this stage."

Carrie Westergard, Exec. Director for the Boise CVB, believes there's still a lot to be said for valuing certain activities over others. "We know that a media visit to our city tells the story far better than an event or desk-side meeting, so we put a high priority on our number of visiting journalists/bloggers."

It seems many DMOs still use standard reporting based on reach and engagement, but quality still reigns supreme.

According to Kim Schmidt, PR Manager for the North Dakota Department of Commerce, "The goal should always be quality over quantity — though we all know that's a careful balance when the stakeholders want both volume and wow."

More brands shaking hands

As PR leaders look to do more with less, they must remain vigilant for ways to stretch budgets, stay relevant and capture new brand fans. As a result, destinations are linking up with consumer products and lifestyle-focused partners in new and creative ways.

Chris Mickey of Wyoming Office of Tourism said his office recently worked with Disney-Pixar to be the official destination partner for the movie "The Good Dinosaur," and also announced a paleontology-focused partnership with Sinclair Oil.

"These partnerships are geared toward increasing our own marketing value, creating fresh content together, and generally piggy-backing off of each others efforts," he said.

Because so many consumer products and commodity brands are moving in the lifestyle direction, partnerships with destinations are now highly sought-after.

Visual curation

In today's environment, we're not just up against competing marketing messages, we're vying for precious moments of attention. We need to move fast, keep it simple and build narratives in new ways just to keep up.

"As a bureau with a small staff that is often pulled in many directions, it's important for us to use curation to close the content gap," said Sara Blatnik, Comms. Manager for the Dublin, Ohio CVB. "Because we can't always produce enough content to keep the pipeline full, we work hard to leverage the right social influencers."

Leadership

What we really wanted to learn was whether or not PR was out in front as a powerful force in building destination brands.

Thankfully, the answer to that question was a dominant "yes." Nearly every DMO we surveyed indicated that PR is in a lead position as it relates to brand building, content planning and strategy setting.

According to TourismOhio PR Manager Tamara Brown, "PR tends to take the lead, in part because we set the messaging/editorial calendar, and because of the multidisciplinary nature of what we do — from building landing pages to driving awareness through social media."

This perspective was a consistent theme across various DMOs.

"At TravelNevada, the PR team leads the strategy because there's intricate messaging and targeting work to be done in today's complex environment. Sure, we still need the hero content and the TV/video spots, but finding relevance and endorsement in an authentic way — that's the real hero work," said Chief Comms. Officer Bethany Drysdale.

It's encouraging to see that key leaders in our field are taking the opportunity to lead, not stepping back like shrinking violets.


Marty McDonald is Senior VP and Tourism Practice Leader at Fahlgren Mortine. Angela Berardino is Chief Strategy and Integration Officer for Turner (a Fahlgren Mortine company). ○



Marty McDonald



Angela Berardino

A woman in a blue and white Scottish kilt and a man in a VR headset stand on a wooden deck in front of a rustic wooden house with a shingled roof. The woman is posing with one leg raised, and the man is smiling while wearing the VR headset.

RACHEL MCPHERSON
Account Executive

ROHIT KESHWANI
Senior Digital Developer

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Carnival 'cruises with a heart' to Cuba, Dominican Republic

A new type of cruise combines traveling with social responsibility.

By Vanessa Wright

Carnival has created Fathom brand cruises, using the 710 passenger Adonia that combines travel with activities that improve living conditions in the countries visited.

Some travel writers have dubbed this the perfect cruise for “do-gooders” while public relations people will see the program as an extension of “Corporate Social Responsibility,” an activity found in most companies and referred to as CSR.

Initial seven-day “social impact” cruises are going to Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Starting prices are \$2,990 for Cuba and \$1,540 for the Dominican Republic.

Carnival has dropped the price to Dominican Republic to as low as \$499 (plus taxes and tips) for 2016 in order to fill the ship. Prices vary based on cabin grade.

“Social impact” activities are not allowed in Cuba. Travelers are urged to talk to the Cuban people and learn about the Cuban culture. Carnival is describing it as a “cultural exchange” and a “people to people exchange.”

First cruises to Cuba in 40 years

The trips to Cuba are the first U.S. cruises to that island in 40 years. Diplomatic relations were restored on July 20, 2015 and President Obama in March 2016 became the first sitting U.S. President to visit Cuba in more than 85 years.

Dominican Republic visitors have the opportunity to participate in “social impact activities” such as helping school children to learn English or helping residents to build water filtration systems since clean water is a high priority on the islands.

Travelers are not required to take part in such activities. They can concentrate on traditional cruise life including side trips to various destinations on the islands.

This writer took one of the bi-weekly trips to the Dominican Republic and found that most fellow travelers became immersed in what is being called “traveling deep.” The country is one of the

poorest in the Caribbean with more than 40% of the population living below the poverty line.

Fathom challenges travelers to travel selflessly, to go beyond just going from one place to another. They can make a positive impact on the lives of those in countries that they visit.

Rich, unique travel experience

“Fathom delivers a rich, engaging travel experience that doesn’t exist elsewhere in the world,” said Tara Russell, President of Fathom and Global Impact Lead, Carnival Corp.

Carnival is the world’s biggest cruise line with ten global brands that carry 11 million passengers yearly. Russell, before joining Carnival, was founder and CEO of Create Common Good, a non-profit that provides training and employment to refugees and a wide variety of other populations with barriers to employment.

Russell said, “We bring people who long to travel deeply together for a transformative journey that offers engaging onboard content, designed to immerse travelers deeply into the region and their community onboard.

“From salsa and mojito making lessons to Stanford storytelling workshops and Curiosity Atlas courses, travelers can find their place at home at sea through many exciting and fun opportunities. Our on-ground social impact activities allow us to come alongside our Dominican friends and partners to help further their missions for far greater collective impact. We’re honored and grateful to pioneer this new category of travel and bring Fathom to life.”

Impact activities start on day one

Social impact activities start on the first day out of port as those interested in such activities take lessons in Spanish.

Travelers going to the Dominican Republic can pick from eight



Vanessa Wright

The Adonia of Carnival (opposite page). The RePapel project turns waste paper into recycled paper products that are sold to consumers. Travelers can help local entrepreneurs generate income and achieve more flexible work schedules (right). Carnival Corporation's new cruise port, Amber Cove, located on the Dominican Republic's northern coast (below right). Tara Russell, President of Fathom and Global Impact Lead, Carnival Corp (below).



general types of activities that will be available: Reforestation & Nursery; Conversation in English with adults; Conversation in English with students; Assisting in construction of water filtration systems; Providing concrete floors in community homes; Taking part in creative arts, music and sports; Working with the Women's Chocolate Cooperative; and Helping entrepreneurs recycled paper and craft projects.

\$80 million Carnival facility

Carnival Corp. has created its own port in Amber Cove, the line's private island in Puerto Plata, for Adonia and its other ships. It is a resort destination with shops, restaurants, cabanas, swimming pool with swim-up bar and areas for children to play.

Fathom has partnered with local community development organization, Entrena, created by U.S. citizen John Seibel, a former Peace Corps volunteer, and his wife Sobeya, a DR citizen, in order to facilitate the social impact activities in Puerto Plata.

It is also partners with Sustainable Development Solutions Network, a local social impact non-profit. Both organizations have more than 30 years in public service.

If you take a cruise to Dominican Republic via Fathom you will understand that although your stay there was limited in time, you will have a lasting impact on the country and the people.

Carnival founded in 1972

Carnival, an American and British-owned company founded in 1972 by Ted Arison and based in Doral, Fla., pioneered the concept of shorter, less expensive cruises.

A wide range of activities are offered by Carnival which calls its ships "The Fun Ships." Trademark is the funnel of the ships which is red, white and blue and shaped like a whale's tail. The mascot for Carnival is "Fun Ship Freddy," a character in the shape of the funnel.

Carnival has 25 ships operating three to 16-day voyages to The Bahamas, Caribbean, Europe, Mexican Riviera, Alaska, Hawaii, Canada, New England, Bermuda, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

Other brands of Carnival besides Fathom include Costa, Cunard Line, Holland America, Princess Cruises, P&O Cruises U.K., P&O Cruises Australia, Seaborne, ultra-luxury cruise line, and Aida, German cruise line based in Rostock, Germany.

Carnival Vista is largest ship

Its newest ship, Carnival Vista, debuted in Spring 2016. It is 1,062 feet long and has a passenger capacity of 3,954 and a gross tonnage of 133,500.

Its features include the first IMAX theater at sea, the first brewpub at sea, and an open-air, pedal-powered SkyRide.

Entertainment and restaurants include the Punchliner Comedy Club, Alchemy Bar, Bluelguana Cantina, RedFrog Rum Bar and Guy's Burger Joint.

Many of the restaurants provide outdoor seating.

An innovation is the Carnival Vista's Family Harbor cabins and



the new Havana Cabanas which have private patios and direct access to the exclusive Havana Bar and pool.

The Carnival Destiny at 101,000 gross tons, built in 1996, held the previous record as the largest passenger ship in the world. It was the first to top 100,000 tons.

Carnival Dream, launched in 2009, then became the largest ship at 128,000 tons. After several voyages in the Mediterranean it then offered weekly Caribbean cruises from Port Canaveral from December 2009.

A sister ship, Carnival Magic, was launched on May 1, 2011. Carnival Breeze became the third Dream-class vessel in June 2012.

Vanessa Wright is Director of Training at Cruise.com. ○

U.S. tourism featured, sold worldwide at IPW 2016

U.S. Travel Association's 48th annual IPW event took place June 18-22 in New Orleans. Travel media, buyers and suppliers from around the world came together to celebrate this year's theme of "bringing the world to America."

By Carla Marie Rupp and Jason Rupp

Abundant international travel is a staple of the economy. Last year, foreign visitors numbered 75 million and spent \$133 billion coming to the U.S., according to figures released at IPW 2016, and these international visitors accounted for more than one million jobs.

Not only is the IPW the U.S. travel industry's foremost event, it's also the single largest generator of travel for the country. According to independent research firm Rockport Analytics, travel initiated by IPW is projected to bring \$4.7 billion in direct bookings to U.S. destinations over the next three years.

A massive, record-breaking attendance of 6,000 travel delegates convened at the June 20 luncheon, a 20 percent increase in delegate-count since the last time the conference was held in New Orleans, in 2002. Delegates, including international and domestic media, represented more than 73 countries. In addition to the usual number of members from the United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico, Germany and France, this year's IPW saw tremendous growth in delegates from China, Taiwan, South Korea, Chile and Columbia, according to the U.S. Travel Association. China now represents the third-largest over-

play. Roger Dow, CEO and President of the U.S. Travel Association, stressed the importance of this connection at the five-day event, which was held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

"We are now, and will always be, a connector of the travel industry, a leader in research and analysis, and a collaborative, trusted adviser to our country's policy-makers, no matter their political persuasion," Dow said.

What's especially great about IPW is it brings buyers and sellers, PR professionals and media together so they can conduct business that would otherwise require exhaustive, around-the-world trips. More than 1,350 travel organizations from all over the U.S. registered for exhibitor booths. PR professionals worked tirelessly to promote their U.S. destinations and attractions to approximately 500 travel journalists from every corner of the globe. International attendees found New Orleans to be fun and exciting, and many found new connections to the city, literally: delegates from Germany were able to fly a new direct route on Condor Airlines to the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport.

Representatives attending the event networked and pitched story ideas and business deals to travel journalists and editors. Professionals represented all segments of the travel industry: states, cities, attractions, hotels, restaurants, national parks, theme parks and more.

IPW featured 1,300 international and domestic buyers of U.S. travel. At least 105,000 appointments took place to generate travel business. Journalists were able to

products to writers for story ideas that will undoubtedly result in placements in numerous international, domestic publications and broadcasting outlets. Travel journalists also networked, trading information on trendy places in New Orleans.



Photo by Jason Rupp

The State of Louisiana was pleased with the results of holding IPW 2016 in New Orleans, and expect the event to result in big bonuses for the local economy: more than one million extra visitors are predicted to arrive in the Big Easy by 2019 as a result of this year's event. According to Louisiana Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, "IPW 2016 is projected to bring an additional \$1 million international visitors to Louisiana with over \$1.7 billion in incremental spending over the next three years."

Nungesser referred to the event as "a tremendous success, not only to the City of New Orleans, but for our entire state," and said his office hosted IPW participants in six post-event familiarization tours across the entire state.

Those tours took the specially-registered IPW media and business travel delegates to get up close with alligators in scenic cypress swamps, Gulf coastal marsh habitats, on the grounds of majestic antebellum plantations, the lower Mississippi Valley, museums and cultural attractions, and to walkable small-towns offering great shopping and the works of native artists, craftsmen and local craft brewers and distillers. Volunteers staffed the press room and were present at each event, showing off their city to the visitors.



Photo courtesy of www.preservationhall.com

seas travel market to the U.S. This, according to U.S. Travel, is thanks in part to a bilateral agreement extending travel visa validity for visitors from China to 10 years.

The underlying theme at IPW 2016 was that travel connects us in both work and

schedule appointments with exhibitors and delegates networked at marketplace events, exhibitor booths, evening social events and luncheons. There were plenty of activities, including jazz, museums and other sightseeing. The publicists promoted their travel

A large press room provided ample working space, with access to media kit materials from publicists. Not only were refreshments and supplies available, but also entertainment diversions for the writers. Radio station WWOZ 96.7 FM New Orleans hosted musical artists, such as blues guitarist and storyteller Spencer Bohren, a local fixture on NOLA's music scene.

Celebrities and food

Celebrities at IPW16 included Broadway star Marilou Henner, who was the surprise emcee at the Monday luncheon. She introduced well-known Eddie George, who sang songs along with casts from Broadway shows such as "Wicked," "On Your Feet," "Par amour," "Chicago," and "Beautiful." Hosts were New York City's PR agency NYC & Company, and NYCgo.com (the official guide to New York) and Broadway Inbound. Singing star Gladys Knight performed at the grand opening to huge cheers. Food celebrity, Chef Emeril Lagasse, was on hand at a

would tell you, you haven't been to New Orleans until you've had the food. Spicy jambalaya and crayfish were crowd favorites.

Tuesday evening was filled with private parties and receptions. These social settings are where real PR networking occurs. Wednesday night's pull-out-all-the-stops finale revealed floats at the Mardi Gras World museum on the Mississippi River. Several New Orleans steamboats anchored, serving as food and music venues. Memorable entertainers included the Preservation Hall All-Stars Jazz Band, a six-piece group, which drew listeners with loud applause with their Dixieland renditions. This band represents a musical venue in the French Quarter founded in 1961 to protect and preserve traditional New Orleans Jazz.

Many PR professionals announced travel news to IPW media attendees. TravMedia USA staffs the on-site press room and the online press room throughout the year, assisting with the hundreds of travel press

releases. TravMedia USA and U.S. Travel Association staff were present at the trade show and helpful with information and contact information for travel articles. Journalists had a variety of official press conferences from which to choose.

For many — if not most — of the registered travel industry

delegates, it was the travel business/social event of the year. Some IPW participants found time to check out the National World War II Museum, which has quadrupled in size from its original D-Day Museum. Other participants rode the St. Charles streetcar, the oldest continuously-operating trolley system in the United States.

A historic milestone was marked at IPW 2016: the U.S. National Park Service was celebrated at IPW for its centennial year. Dow said IPW premier brand partner Brand USA (whose aim is making the United States a great place to visit) is supporting the U.S. National Park Service Centennial.

Many delegates took the time to claim their tickets in the Exhibit Hall to see screenings of Brand USA's breath-taking, giant-screen film, "National Parks Adventure" on several days at the New Orleans' Energy Giant Screen Theater. The film is set to show in 44 locations around the world.

Brand USA and IPW renewed their partnership until 2020, officials said, noting that more events are in the works such as this film.

Changes for media

There were changes with this year with the annual IPW Media Marketplace, sponsored by U.S. Travel Association and CityPASS.

New this year an elimination of the Reverse Media Marketplace, normally held after the regular Media Marketplace on Monday. This period had destinations and PR reps walking around to the tables where the domestic and foreign journalists sat in previous years after lunch.

This year, an entire day was given for journalists to go to the tables of destinations. This proved successful and useful for speaking with PR professionals. Publicists were more easily able to get their travel messages across to members of the media, because they had more time.

Other years, publicists sat at the tables during the morning, and then journalists were at the tables in the afternoon. A downside was that some journalists complained that they didn't get many visitors to their table, so networking didn't prove successful. International journalists were in the front, while domestic journalists were placed in the rear tables. This year, the destination reps stayed at their own tables before and after lunch.

After the personal networking day of media and travel publicists, a reception was held as usual where the annual IPW Travel Writer Awards were given. Phoebe Smith, editor-in-chief of the U.K.-based travel magazine *Wanderlust*, and UK-based freelance travel journalist Lindsay Sutton both won awards in the "Best U.S. Travel Destination Article" category. *TOUR* Magazine editor Héctor Fabio Rizzo won "Best Trade Publication Article" for his article on New York, and editor Amanda Fernandes Leonel de Queiroz won "Best IPW Host City Article" for his coverage of IPW 2015 in Brazilian magazine *Melhor Viagem*.

Each winner received \$1,000 U.S. and an award certificate.

Already the IPW official website is promoting next year's annual IPW, which will be hosted in Washington D.C. A clever PR gimmick for the 2017's IPW included a promotion where people could take pictures on a large replica of Abraham Lincoln's monument chair.

Carla Marie Rupp and Jason Rupp are freelance journalists and travel writers based in New York City. ○

Photo by Carla Marie Rupp



party hosted by Visit Florida.

Along with NYC & Company, 14 other New York City travel partners were at IPW this year. Some of these included 9/11 Memorial & Museum, Alliance for Downtown New York, Carnegie Hall, Hotel Edison, One World Observatory, The New York Pass, and Rockefeller Center. Fred Dixon, CEO and President of NYC & Company, appeared at a press conference. The new Hudson Yard was one project he discussed. The New York City sponsored the Monday NYC Centerstage luncheon this year for the fifth consecutive time.

Each year, the cities that host IPW know the value of having this huge event in town and tend to pull out all the stops. Sunday night's opening night event at the famous Superdome included a festive celebration with all the foods of New Orleans. Major restaurants and their food stations were featured around the playing field, and as any local

Engaging influencers to drive powerful results

Successful influencer campaigns observe the roles of nuance and transparency, and go beyond content to prioritize influencers for maximum effect.

By Maite Velez-Couto

With influencers becoming more commonly integrated into brand marketing campaigns, a controversy has begun to emerge. Are brands really seeing the benefits? How can marketers identify authentic influencers who do not buy followers or artificially inflate their numbers to secure contracts then not deliver on goals? Do the influencers act in a way so that they continue to maintain the trust of consumers who follow them? All these questions are causing companies big and small and across diverse industries to ask themselves whether they should invest in influencer marketing, and if and when they will see real returns, either at the cash register or in greater mindshare among consumers.

Trust and transparency are essential when determining the true value of an influencer. The best — but not all — influencers will disclose their relationships with a brand up front and with their audience on an ongoing basis. There seems to be a double standard of sorts, however, with celebrity influencers and certain retailers that believe they can fool the public. Examples include when Kim Kardashian ignored the rules without consequence and when brands like Lord & Taylor promoted sponsored content without a disclaimer.

Bad practice doesn't pay. Brands and influencers can face serious risks when they forego transparency, including loss of consumer trust, overall credibility, legal issues, fines and, ultimately, business. A clause necessitating transparency in every influencer contract is a best practice to adopt that can reduce these risks.

See beyond the numbers

Not all influencers are created equal, so it's important for brands to do some research and ask the right questions before forming relationships. Reach remains an important baseline comparator, although influencer numbers should not be the only factor weighed. Brands also need to look at engagement potential. Having 1,000 contacts in your phone does not mean very much unless you're sure most of them will take your call and value what you have to share.

Think beyond the obvious audiences. Consider engaging with an influencer who can deliver messages effectively to a spe-

cific or niche target audience that would otherwise be difficult to reach. In other words, a travel brand seeking greater reach and engagement among a senior audience should not focus solely on travel influencers. Instead, consider influencers who align with a target audience's lifestyle or passion points to drive a comprehensive marketing strategy.

Content is only the beginning

Social media is fundamental for influencer reach, but successful brands think beyond content creation. Giving influencer partners access to a bigger platform can make engagement deeper and more meaningful. Using their persona and content with controlled media — e.g., satellite media tours — and advertising or contests are some effective ways to expand their reach.

Prioritize influencers who have a good eye for design or presentation; this can ensure compelling visuals are used along with content across social media platforms. Also consider on what platform — Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn — an influencer is most popular as that will determine the demographic audience reached. Influencers with experience as media experts, spokespeople or videographers also add a lot of value to a brand campaign. Someone like Johnny Jet, Diane Mizota and Jeana Shandraw are great examples.

Adopt award-winning strategies

The most successful brands take the time to lay a strong foundation for their influencer campaigns prior to launch. As a VP at rbb Communications, I helped develop the award-winning Hampton by Hilton's Seekender campaign. Prior to selecting influencers, we finalized a strategy and goals with our client. This is a simple but crucial step. Then a customized ranking system was created that compared the strengths and weaknesses of the influencers identified. Also important was to speak directly with each candidate to negotiate and customize agreements. This careful planning established trust and a comfort level with each ambassador that remained effective throughout our Seekender campaign.

Our #MomsEscape campaign for Dreams Resorts & Spas is another prime example where a thoughtful approach to influencer selection made a big difference in securing measureable results. That campaign

reported a 12 percent overall increase in bookings year-over-year for the brand following program launch.

Both campaigns were set up in ways that enabled us to demonstrate and assess the roles influencers played in the success of each, such as exclusive offers and tailored messages for their followers only and special URL codes for tracking purposes. Business results were achieved with double digit increases in bookings and new followers engaged via social channels.

Start smart to avoid mistakes

Common mistakes brands make when enlisting influencers include:

Being fixated on a specific number of followers and/or only focusing on brand name influencers;

Insufficient research to identify the best influencers.

Believing they do not need to pay influencers for their work; they don't work for free.

Hiring influencers but not providing them with appropriate tools to drive a specific sales message.

Seeing influencers solely as content creators without tapping them as partners in brand promotion in other effective ways (lending their name to contests, special offers, etc.).

Thinking every influencer should have the same agreements. Customization will bring better results.

Not being specific enough with the scope of work or expectations. Set specific goals.

Not granting influencers enough editorial freedom to create organic content with added review/approval guidelines.

There's a lot of subtlety, nuance and expertise involved in the most effective influencer campaigns. A brand with limited internal resources can enlist the help of a communications agency with experience navigating the influencer landscape. These agencies help companies make smart decisions and avoid getting little or no return on their investment. The right partner can also help ensure all the benchmark measures are in place, and test them before a campaign launch to increase the likelihood that the effort will translate into long-term success for the brand.

Maite Velez-Couto is a Vice President at rbb Communications in Miami. ○



Maite Velez-Couto



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Promoting tourism is integral for developing nations

A strategic and effective communications plan for a developing country can accelerate its venture to prosperity, economic diversity and self-sufficiency

By Richard Rubenstein

A nation's economic footprint can be transformed through the currency of tourism and the influence of the media. Developing countries, now more than ever before, are turning to tourism for economic growth and diversity, and are working with public relations agencies to establish themselves as marketable brands. Global communications allows us to revolutionize the way the world engages and interacts with a nation and its people. By changing public perception of the world's uncharted territories, the art of communications is inspiring more and more travelers to visit emerging markets that have not typically been thought of as tourist destinations in the past.

The United States Institute of Peace published a special report in 2009 stating that although often underestimated, the tourism industry has the power to promote peace and stability in developing countries by providing jobs, generating income, diversifying the economy, protecting the environment, and promoting cross-cultural awareness. In 2015, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), reported that the growth of the travel and tourism sector (2.8 percent) outpaced that of the global economy (2.3 percent) and in total generated US \$7.2 trillion (9.8 percent of global GDP), supporting 284 million jobs, equivalent to 1 in 11 jobs in the global economy. With these benefits in mind, the United Nations has identified the development of tourism as one of the methods developing nations can use to advance their economies.

PR plays an increasingly essential role in driving awareness, establishing and accelerating the popularity of less-traveled destinations among global tourists. Elsevier, a world-leading provider of scientific literature, analyzed communications in the tourism sector and found that PR is more than a necessity as it represents a catalyst for change, a means for shaping new attitudes and for advancing an audience's understanding and acceptance. Over the last decade, the digital sphere and social media networks have contributed to strengthening this bridge of influence and engagement.

There is indeed a significant ROI in a solid, competitive and comprehensive communications and influencer program that delivers consistency and targeted results. According to a global study by Nielson, 92 percent of consumers said that they trusted earned media, which includes publicity, recommendations from friends and family members, more

than any other form of advertising. Additionally, WAYN (Where Are You Now?) reported that 52 percent of respondents changed their travel plans after researching their trip using social media; and 52 percent of Facebook users said that their friends' travel photos had inspired their own vacation choices. In today's fast-moving digital environment, sharing positive travel experiences online can influence the masses by enhancing their perceptions of a country.



Take for example, Rwanda, the verdant East African nation that is home to some of the world's rarest wildlife and most breathtaking landscapes. Rubenstein Public Relations was retained to help raise awareness of the peaceful and progressive country it is today and elevate its visibility, appeal and competitive edge among its African neighbors. With a strong focus on wildlife conservation, Rwanda has put in tremendous efforts to save and protect its mountain gorillas, one of the most endangered species in the world. Beyond providing a safe, stable environment, a key component of their conservation program included the annual Kwigizira naming ceremony for baby gorillas, which enables ecologists to track their growth and watch for potentially dangerous environmental issues. Another key aspect of their conservation efforts included the arrival of seven lions from South Africa to diversify and balance Rwanda's eco-system, while also helping to increase visitors to Rwanda's Akagera National Park.

We invited select reporters from key markets around the world to experience Rwanda and its remarkable eco-tourism. Our tourism campaign also featured a host of other attractions including an exhilarating safari route, bird watching and canopy tours, miles of beautiful caves, and spectacular lakefront

resorts. Additionally, Kigali, the nation's capital, is a rich cosmopolitan center offering cultural, business and sporting events, a bustling nightlife and a vibrant fashion scene. Travel editors and writers embraced Rwanda as their latest 'discovery,' resulting in more than two billion media impressions within a six-month timeframe. According to the WTTC, the direct impact of travel and tourism in 2015 grew by 7.1 percent and Rwanda is expected to attract more than 1 million international tourist arrivals this year alone.



Richard Rubenstein

On trend with tourism growth in Africa lies Angola, a nation that the WTTC declared in its latest report to be one of the fastest-emerging tourism destinations in the world. One of RPR's current clients is an international investment firm dedicated to creating global value for developing countries in Africa while contributing to their economic development. Along with many partners in the market developing the country's profile of global economic stability, our client is supporting and investing in the growth of Angola's tourism and hospitality sector. RPR devised a dynamic communications campaign that helps support the company's objectives by publicizing the various investment opportunities emerging in the region. We continue to generate a wide range of international coverage in both business and consumer press. An economic narrative may be as compelling as traditional tourism exposure for projecting an image of market stability — an important factor for attracting foreign visitors. Reinforcing the above mentioned WTTC report and Angola's underlying potential, a recent study released by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism announced that by 2020, Angola is expected to host 4.6 million tourists who will provide an estimated revenue of \$4.7 billion. A strong tourism industry can also help emerging countries to self-sustain rather than to rely on outside investment to boost their economies.

As the regulatory climate and travel restrictions continue to evolve, developing countries have more opportunities to transform their global image through strategic communications programs that showcase their unique attributes and cultural vibrancy. Positive, creative and consistent messaging has the power to attract audiences worldwide to unfamiliar places that are ready to be discovered as premier destinations.

Richard Rubenstein is President of Rubenstein Public Relations. ○

A new frontier of influence

Embracing travel influencers and understanding the nuanced ways in which they use social media will expose your destination to previously untapped markets.

By Lou Hammond

If today's travel influencers had been told when they were five that there would be a profession in which they could travel the world, document their experiences in real time with an audience made up of people who are considered their "followers," they probably would have responded, "I'll even eat my vegetables for that job!"

To clarify: travel influencers have been around forever, only in a more offline capacity until the emergence of the Internet in the mid '90s.

In the '60s, long before Netflix or streaming, the *Sound of Music* drove an influx of visitors to Austria. In the '70s, there was no talk of "online influencers," no blogs to read or articles you could Google. Yet, *Travel & Leisure* convinced readers that "a new family resort in the backwater of Orlando, Florida" was a must-see destination. Legendary rocker Jim Morrison lived out his entire life long before the idea of YouTube was even fathomable, yet his burial place in *Père Lachaise* Cemetery has more than 4,000 reviews on TripAdvisor and a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence. Travel influencers have been around since the second century of the Christian Era, beginning with the Greek travel writer Pausanias, but the emergence of the digital channel has evened the playing field and changed the game entirely.

Social media is no longer a novelty for brands, destination marketers or PR teams. Instead, social media and influencers have become a necessity to successful marketing and public relations initiatives. A cohesive strategy that involves online influencers and offline engagement is not as tricky as it may sound. Again, we revert back to our traditional understanding of marketing and human beings — get people talking. Sure, there's less face-to-face contact these days with people hiding behind their phones in the subway, at the dinner table or in elevators, but word of mouth (you may know it as WOM) still rings true as one of the most effective ways to market a brand. All to say, it's worthwhile to invest the time in identifying quality influencers and establishing relationships with them to bring them into the conversation surrounding your brand.

With the continued emergence of new social media platforms (e.g., Snapchat, Kik and WhatsApp) and the sheer dependency we have developed globally on the Internet, influencer engagement has grown from just

a buzzword to a full-blown strategy. When tapped strategically, it has the potential to influence an audience so large, yet so finitely identified and targeted, that it creates not only awareness but also forges long-lasting advocacy and meaningful relationships.

So, as a brand or a destination, how do you tap into this ever-flowing fountain of influence? You go back to the basics. According to Johnny Jet, founder of Johnny-Jet.com and a travel influencer, it's all about establishing the foundation for a long-term relationship and understanding your audience.

"It's important for destinations to understand that meaningful influence takes time," said Johnny Jet. "Often, brands don't see beyond just a single event or sponsored post. Forge long term relationships with influencers so the conversation can continue well beyond a single promised blog or Instagram post."

The effect of a long-term, organically built relationship far supersedes that of a quick one-time post for a lot of Likes. So often we attack a content strategy as "What do we need to tell them?" rather than "What do they want to hear?"

Travel influencers are often considered destination trend-setters. They tend to have a creative edge to their content coloring outside the lines to turn otherwise generic content into the next must-go spot on the map. According to Johnny Jet, brands should take a similar "outside the lines" approach when working with influencers. Invite a group of foodie influencers to your travel destination and wow them with a creative take on a savory meal. What Wolfgang Puck did for the Los Angeles restaurant scene has grown into what he's done for the city as a whole. While hosting foodie influencers at your travel destination can help you reach an entirely different audience for an entirely different reason, it still benefits your overall brand. It simply segments your brand into its component parts to reach a potential new online audience you may have previously been missing.

How do you spot these globe-trotting influencers? Turns out, if they're the real deal, you'll know it ... and not by the number of followers they have, but by the *quality* of followers they have. With so many spam accounts and purchased followers these days almost anyone can buy a decent following.

If we base influence simply on the number of followers, that's saying anyone can start an account, purchase a few hundred thousand followers or Likes and voila, they're influential. Johnny Jet says, "Not so fast. If someone only has 20 followers but those followers include *National Geographic*, *Condé Nast Traveler* and BBC Travel, that person is going to mean more to a destination than someone with 10,000 spam followers."

Influencers like Johnny Jet are the golden eggs. They have the numbers brands want and the quality to match. Each one of Johnny Jet's 86,000 Twitter followers chose to follow him for a reason at some point in the last eight years. That

is 86,000 people who want to know where he's traveling and what he has to say about it when he gets back. Ladies and gentlemen, it does not get more influential than that. We don't know where this is going in another decade, but today online/offline influencer marketing is the path to success.

Lou Hammond is Founder and Chairman of Lou Hammond Group. ○



Lou Hammond

PR news brief

Allison+Partners acquires Germany's Higher Ground

Global communications firm Allison+Partners today announced that it has acquired Germany-based technology agency Higher Ground Communications.

Higher Ground Communications maintains offices in Berlin and Munich. The agency, which specializes in B2B and consumer tech, was founded in 2010. Clients include deals.com, lumosity, TBM, TuneIn and Rally Software, among others.

Allison+Partners' new Berlin and Munich outposts effectively double that agency's European presence. The MDC Partners unit currently holds additional offices in London, Lyon and Paris. Allison+Partners in March also launched its integrated content division, All Told, in Asia and acquired Tokyo-based Focused Communications the same month.

Higher Ground principles Martina Mueller and Vivian Dadamio now join Allison+Partners as senior vice presidents to lead the new offices. They will report to Allison+Partners global corporate and Europe president Matthew Della Croce.

"Allison+Partners has been recognizing significant growth globally, including in Europe. Over the past few years both Martina and Vivian have been tremendous partners and we collectively agreed this acquisition was the right next step to help expand our presence in the German market," Della Croce told O'Dwyer's.

San Francisco-based Allison+Partners now holds 25 offices worldwide. The agency in 2014 accounted for \$37 million in net fees, boasting more than 28 percent growth from the year prior.

The launch plan: from inspiration to execution

The challenge of designing the right strategy to successfully launch a new travel and tourism brand.

By Samantha Jacobs

Since launching Hemsworth Communications two years ago, we've been approached by some of the world's leading travel and hospitality brands wanting to take their exposure and business to the next level. In addition, we've also frequently been contacted by those behind new or emerging brands who've asked, "how can we use PR as part of our launch, creating buzz and business?"

Helping launch a new player — or helping an existing one with the rollout of a new program, service or amenity — is an exciting part of our job. That said, launches can also be one of the most challenging. Coming to market with something new gives you an edge, but with that comes the challenge of not having built in brand equity or awareness. In addition, the travel industry is now seeing new brands, products, services and technologies launching almost daily. We're seeing a competitive landscape like never before, so you definitely have your work cut out for you.

Deciding to hire an experienced, passionate PR firm is the first step. If you've done that, you're already ahead of the game. But that doesn't automatically make your launch a success. In order to make it a success, I believe there are three core phases that should be incorporated into any launch plan.

Phase one: research & analysis

Suggested target media segments or tactics are fine, but if your PR firm offers a recommended plan of attack immediately after you engage them, run! Conducting the proper research and analysis is critical. Before we start developing any new launch PR program, it's imperative that we have an understanding of how our client stands out from the rest of the pack. We need to know how crowded your space is, how your key competitors are promoting themselves. We need to identify possible areas of opportunity and ensure we have our finger on the pulse of what the media are saying as it relates to your business.

Once our research is complete, and we've shared our findings via a competitive landscape audit, we work with our clients as a strategic partner to map out a dynamic, tailored launch plan. You're only new once, so when introducing your new brand or offering to the public, it's important to take a calculated approach. It's not always about going big or spending a for-

tune. While many companies come to us to execute a creative stunt or global blitz, the situation doesn't always call for that. Sometimes, the best way to launch is to offer an exclusive coverage opportunity to a well-respected media outlet. This can lead to a better story or even the coveted cover. Challenge your agency to think about the end goal and find the smartest, most cost-effective way to get there.

Phase two: creating powerful assets

Simultaneous to developing a launch plan, we begin crafting a suite of powerful assets that we can use to tell a client's story. When companies come to us from another firm, the first question we ask is "can you please send us your press kit?" Time and again, we get a similar answer: "we don't have one." It never ceases to amaze me how many agencies and companies miss such an important step.

This is especially important when it comes to launching a new company or a new offering from an existing travel brand. Before we can ever begin reaching out to the media to tell your story, we have to have compelling messaging, background information and creative assets to share. The travel press is inundated with news daily. What's going to make them take notice of you instead of the other guy? Avoid putting the cart before the proverbial horse and spend time working with your agency to develop materials that will make journalists' lives easier. It will pay dividends and they will appreciate the legwork you've done.

You also want to be creative and remember that times have changed. The standard fact sheet or FAQ will no longer get the job done. This is the travel industry, so have fun! Incorporate facts, figures and visuals into your media collateral.

Phase three: media relations

Now that you have a plan and materials to provide to the press, it's time to get aggressive. Whether you launch with a high-impact stunt or take a more grassroots approach, the most important things are a) having the right targeted, yet extensive media list, and b) consistency. If you've hired an agency that brings strong media relationships to the table, this should be easy. No matter what, it's important to get creative and find unique angles to get your story in front of the right editors and producers, and follow up consistently

until the job is done. The right PR agency will know who to target, and how to target them — in some cases, because you're selling something new, attaching your story to a larger trend — and they won't take no for an answer.

So, your brand is launched, you're out in the marketplace and you've built momentum. It wasn't easy to get to this point. As important as your launch media relations program was, however, what's even more important is developing your post-launch news pipeline. You're not new anymore, so you'll need to find new ways to remain relevant. And it's hard to stay relevant if you don't have anything new to say.

A strong PR agency partner will master your launch, getting your news everywhere you want for it to be, but they will also work with you to develop a series of creative story angles to keep things moving. They won't rest on their laurels, letting your story die on the vine. They will attach your brand to industry trends. They will think about what's timely and how you fit into the mix. They'll monitor what the media is covering and proactively, tirelessly, pursue consistent coverage.

The right PR agency will also understand the power of social media, ensuring you're well-positioned in digital channels, bringing new ideas and engaging on your behalf. It's incredible how many people get their news through Twitter and Facebook today, or how many choose their next vacation destination by searching photos on Instagram or Pinterest. Don't forget to make social media part of your launch strategy, as well as your ongoing plan, or you'll miss out on millions of potential consumers.

Trust your agency and have faith in the process. If you have an agency on your side that understands the industry and your business, has a proven media relations track record and is fun to work with, don't give up when times get tough. The media may not always latch onto your desired story angle, but if you have the right players onboard, success will come. It might be a challenge, but from my perspective, anything worth doing usually is!

Samantha Jacobs is Founder and President of Hemsworth Communications. ○



Samantha Jacobs



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Strategic alliances boost travel clients' message

Aligning your brand with like-minded consumer partners can build credibility for tourism destinations and hotels. When it comes to integrating those partners into PR activations, however, sometimes the best partnerships are not always the most obvious ones.

By Laura Davidson

As our marketplace grows ever more crowded, agencies are looking everywhere for new ways to be heard. We're testing everything from hard-selling online auctions that shout at our customers to branded content that whispers "trust me" so softly it's sometimes hard to tell who's talking. Among these many innovative strategies, one that is working particularly well for our agency is strategic partnerships. We are successfully playing matchmaker, pairing off our clients, not just with those companies and products working in the travel space, but also tech innovators, perfumers and toy companies that, at first sight, share no common interests.

When one of our clients, Residence Inn, rebranded in its 40th anniversary year, it turned its focus to the Millennial business traveler. To attract the attention of this famously evasive audience, LDPR sought out a strategic partner that spoke the generational vernacular and played off the Millennial romance with digital technology in a way that was edgy and newsy enough to still be cool. Blippar, an app that allows you to "blip" everyday objects and images through your smart phone camera, isn't exactly a household name and — as yet, doesn't have a travel application — but it was the perfect fit.

When Residence Inn launched its new experiential social gathering concept, The Mix, LDPR asked Blippar to create customized "augmented reality" experiences at the four launch events in LA, Boston, Austin and Washington, D.C. "Blippable" coasters unlocked trivia, beer pairings, and shareable "selfie" digital postcards. Local celebrities in each market hosted the events, and encouraged attendees to share the fun on social media using the #InnTheMix hashtag.

Destinations are usually promoted through their visuals — videos, photos and film — and sometimes through their

tastes (e.g., food and drink). But how many are sold through their smells? When Visit Scotland launched its #ScotSpirit campaign in February, which positioned the country as a sensuous place that stirs the soul, LDPR introduced the campaign to the US media with a multi-sensory event that included Scottish cuisine and its famous spirit (courtesy of Balvenie, one of the great whisky brands, and a sponsor of

grance line. It's said that smell is our most evocative sense, and one whiff of Bitter Rose, Broken Spear (one of the three fragrances in the line) promises to flood the synapses with thoughts of "smelted iron, bitter rose, and melancholy thistle." Another, Isle Ryder, supposedly whisks you away to the glens scented with spruce, fir, and wildflowers.

When you think of Atlantis, chances are that building Legos is not the first activity that comes to mind. Yet Lego became the perfect partner when the famous Bahamian resort launched its AKA Kids Club and was looking for a new way to get its family message heard. Atlantis partnered with both Lego and Jet Blue to host a "JetAdventure" superfam that brought 50 media and mom bloggers — and their kids — to the resort on a JetBlue charter flight along with Lego master builders and a five-foot Lego scuba diver. LDPR even got Toys R Us in the action to host a kick-off event. Atlantis opened a dedicated "Lego construction room" at its new Kids Club, and hosted Lego master builder camps. By tapping into Jet Blue and Lego's resources, social media outlets and fan base, Atlantis' AKA kids club saw a 42 percent increase in visitors and helped to secure Atlantis the coveted "Number-one Family Beach Resort" award from *Parents Magazine*.



Laura Davidson



Famed Bahamas resort Atlantis Paradise Island partnered with Lego to launch its AKA Kids Club and also partnered with *Parents* magazine to launch a healthy, kid-friendly menu at the ocean-themed resort.

the event). But we also included something unexpected: the distinctive aromas of Scotland, captured by Brooklyn-based indie perfumers D.S. & Durga.

The founders — a musician and an architect — were so inspired by the Scottish Highlands and the country's ancient Celtic culture that they created the Hylnds fra-

So, the next time you play matchmaker and use a strategic partnership to amplify your clients' message, keep in mind that similar backgrounds aren't always an indicator of success. In PR, as in love, the union of two very different partners often produces the most interesting results.

Laura Davidson is President of Laura Davidson Public Relations (LDPR). ○

U.S. nearing media saturation point

As mobile Internet use surges worldwide, several recent reports suggest daily average increases in digital media consumption is coming not only at a cost to analogue media formats, but could eventually result in U.S. consumers hitting a media consumption saturation point.

By Jon Gingerich

American adults this year will spend a daily average of about 12 hours and five minutes interacting with media of some variety, according to a new report by digital market research company eMarketer. This includes more than three hours on mobile devices, a little more than two hours on desktop and laptop computers, more than four hours watching television, about an hour-and-a-half listening to radio and a little under a half-hour with print media.

The current average time spent per day with major media accounts for a five-minute increase in total media consumption from 2015, a 10-minute increase from 2014 and a 25-minute increase from 2012. However, eMarketer's report indicates that Americans' rabid media consumption may be slowing, with a ceiling to those gains expected in the years to come.

eMarketer's new report, "US Time Spent with Media," shows that American adults' average time spent per day with all media is expected to see gains of only about two minutes in 2017 and another minute by 2018, revealing total growth time within the next two years of only about 0.1 percent.

Digital media, by far the fastest growing media format — which includes mobile devices, as well as desktop and laptop computers — will continue to see bigger gains than any media category, comprising more than six hours of average daily consumption by 2018. Most of these gains will come from mobile devices and video. Desktop and laptop computers are the only devices in this category expected to slow in usage, losing about one minute of use in 2017 and another two minutes by 2018.

TV, on the other hand, which remains the largest serving of Americans' daily media diet, will see the biggest losses. That medium, whose usage has been steadily plummeting in recent years — losing between five and ten minutes of daily use per year — will comprise only 3 hours and 55 minutes of Americans' daily media usage in 2018, which is nearly an hour less than the average time Americans spent with the medium in 2012.

Newspaper and magazines, already at the bottom of the media pyramid, by 2018 will comprise only about 15 minutes and 11 minutes of average daily time, respectively. A silver lining for this category is the detail that total print media consumption time is

expected to slide by only about a minute in 2017 and another minute in 2018.

Perhaps the most prescient detail of the report is the notion that digital media, by far the most boisterous medium, will see only a modest rise in usage in the coming years, gaining 10 more average daily minutes of use time in 2017 and another eight minutes in 2018.

Even mobile, the digital media category that experienced the largest gains in recent years — jumping from an hour and 28 minutes in 2012 to two hours and 15 minutes the following year — is expected to slow: Americans will spend only nine more minutes interacting with mobile media in 2017 than this year, and only eight more minutes the following year.

A slow-down in growth for the most popular media category, the report notes, signals that Americans may be nearing a saturation point in daily media usage, and that increases in time spent with one media format could be arriving at the expense of time spent with the others.

Global mobile surging

A June report by London-based media services network ZenithOptimedia shows that, on a global scale, people will increase their mobile Internet usage by nearly 28 percent this year. Nearly an hour-and-a-half will now be devoted by people globally per day — an average of 86 minutes — to mobile Internet, according to Zenith's annual forecast, which included data from 71 countries, a surge that will account for an overall global media consumption increase of 1.4 percent.

Nearly three-quarters — 71 percent — of all Internet media consumption is now mobile, according to the report. Accounting for much of these gains is Asia Pacific and North America, where mobile use now constitutes, respectively, 73 percent and 72 percent of all Internet media consumption.

Zenith's forecast, like eMarketer's report, also suggests that mobile's gains are coming at a cost to other media formats. Desktop Internet use, which continued to grow globally until 2014, is now experiencing a worldwide decline, and is expected to fall 15.8 percent in 2016 to comprise an average daily use time of only 36 minutes.

Use of all other forms of media are similarly expected to dip, according to the report. Movie theater use is expected to shrink by

.5 percent this year. Television, still the most widely used media format — accounting for 41 percent of all global media consumption in 2015 — will decline 1.5 percent in 2016. Radio will fall 2.4 percent, and print media is expected to plummet, with newspapers tumbling by 5.6 percent and magazines experiencing a debilitating drop of 6.7 percent. Taken together, all non-mobile forms of media use are expected to decline by 3.4 percent this year.

Social media now major news source

Of course, digital media has also affected how we're accessing information. June research published by Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism illustrates the rising global popularity of social media's use as a news source. Reuters' "Digital News Report 2016," which gauges news consumption habits around the world and polled approximately 50,000 people in 26 countries, reported that more than half — 51 percent — of respondents said they now use social media as a weekly news source, and nearly a quarter — 24 percent — said they share news items with others via that medium. Of those polled, 12 percent claimed that social media is now their primary source of news.

The study found that the practice of using social media as a news source is especially common among younger generations. Nearly a third — 28 percent — of those surveyed between the ages of 18 and 24 now claim that social media is their primary source of news, beating TV for the first time, which ranked at 24 percent (print, by contrast, drew a distant six percent). The report stated that social media is now a more important source for news than TV news for every age group categorized under the age of 45, delegating television a medium now preferred by older generations.

It's also a phenomenon especially common in the U.S.: 46 percent of American respondents now cite social media as a news source, nearly twice the amount of respondents who said this three years ago, according to Reuters. Additionally, 14 percent of all Americans polled said social media is now their main source of news, outranking most of the 26 countries included in the poll, with the exception for Ireland, Portugal, Brazil, Australia and Greece.

The report concludes that the surge of news accessed via social media sites has accounted for "the biggest change in digital media," and its authors "find strong concerns that personalized news and more algorithmic selection of news will mean missing out on important information or challenging viewpoints." The study mentions that most people tend to share news items that meet only their approval. ○

O'Dwyer's guide to TRAVEL AND TOURISM PR



The Carolyn Izzo team (L to R): Carolyn Izzo-Feldman, President & Chief Strategist; Patricia Fahie, Executive Vice President; and Kate Wark, Senior Vice President.

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Today's travelers have access to a world of information. 5W Public Relations helps some of the world's most admired travel and hospitality brands reach these consumers, providing inspiration for their next adventure.

5W's travel clients include industry leaders such as JetSmarter, the private jet company revolution-

izing private travel and Cheapoair.com, one of the largest and strongest online consumer travel companies. Crafting programs that integrate core public relations with digital media programs, content creation, celebrity and influencer integrations, partnerships and events we build our business by building our client partners businesses. 5W's team captures attention for travel and hospitality brands in a crowded, distracted world.

We help our clients garner ongoing publicity, educating business and leisure travelers, media and travel influencers about destinations, properties and tourism programs. We've helped our clients create news that breaks them out of travel media, generating coverage that spans lifestyle, tech, business



Each January, the Cayman Islands hosts Cayman Cookout, the Caribbean's most anticipated culinary event of the year, in partnership with *Food & Wine* magazine and The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman. This annual gastronomic celebration is hosted by renowned Chef Eric Ripert alongside numerous celebrity chefs including Anthony Bourdain, José Andrés, Tom Colicchio and Florian Bellanger, among others. Coyne secured top-tier U.S. journalists (Coastal Living, DuJour, Reuters, Haute Living, Upscale Living) to attend the event, built an immersive trip itinerary and coordinated interviews with celebrity chefs.

and more.

Client experience includes Jetsmarter, Fareportal, Embassy Suites, Gray Line NY, The Loews Regency, Tzell Travel Group, Luna Park at Coney Island, EL AL Airlines, Reserve Cut, and more.

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Celebrating the milestone of 20 years in business this year, CIIC is a full-service public relations, social media and marketing firm specializing in creating dynamic campaigns for the travel, hospitality, food & beverage and lifestyle industries. CIIC's work is not only strategic, creative and results-driven, but award winning as well. CIIC's work has been honored with a Media Relations Award by PR Daily as well as HSMIA (Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International) Adrian Awards across Gold, Silver and Bronze categories.

Headquartered in New York, with a second location in Miami, CIIC has affiliate offices in Los Angeles, San Diego and Mexico City, and is an exclusive member of latamPR. Additionally, CIIC is certified as a women's business enterprise by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

Our clients include: Casa del Mar Golf Resort & Spa (Los Cabos, Mexico); Coney Island Brewing Company (NYC); Hotel El Ganzo (Cabo San Lucas, Mexico); Mexico Grand Hotels (Los Cabos, Mexico); MyWeddingPrice.com; Playa Hotels & Resorts; Solmar Hotels & Resorts (Los Cabos, Mexico); Thanks Again; The Time Hotel Nyack; The Roundhouse; The Food & Shops at LaGuardia Airport (NYC); Tobin Parnes Design (NYC); Rancho San Lucas; Riu Plaza New York Times Square; Riu Palace Antillas & Riu Palace Aruba (Aruba).

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Cinch PR & Branding Group is a full-service, boutique PR agency headquartered in San Francisco working with the nation's top consumer, hospitality and lifestyle brands. Comprised of a creative and savvy team of industry professionals, Cinch operates as a true and trusted collaborative partner to its clients and strives to provide incisive, strategic counsel that drives marketing objectives and keeps clients top of mind for consumers.

Working only with brands the team truly admires, Cinch is able to fashion a brand's differentiators into authentic and compelling stories that target the right audiences, amplifying a brand's presence and generating a genuine word-of-mouth that resonates with media and key stakeholders.

Past and present clients include: Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows, Hyatt Hotels, Visit Mendocino County, Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, La Crema, Freemark Abbey, St. Francis Winery & Vineyards, Levi's Stadium, Ghirardelli Square, Quince, Cotogna, The Melt, and Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants.

COYNE

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Thomas F. Coyne, Founder & CEO
Rich Lukis, President, Coyne
John Gogarty, President, Coyne PR
Jennifer Kamienski, SVP
Lauren Mackiel Gory, VP

Coyne's travel group has managed and executed world-class events, brand-building campaigns,

social media programs and media relations for some of the travel industry's most prominent brands and destinations.

With clients spanning from Disney Parks & Resorts and Motel 6 to South Africa and The Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, the travel team has developed ideas and campaigns that are out of this world – literally – including sending Buzz Lightyear to “infinity and beyond” with NASA.

Our in-depth working knowledge of the travel media puts our team in sync and in touch with the industry and your target audience daily. Coyne regularly places stories in national, local and trade publications for clients within the travel space. The key to our success – and yours — is that we garner coverage for our clients in both expected and unexpected places. From editor desksides to ground-breaking promotions, Coyne has the experience to make your brand stand out in a crowded travel marketplace.

DEVELOPMENT COUNSELLORS INTERNATIONAL (DCI)

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Andrew Levine, President/Chief
Creative Officer
Karyl Leigh Barnes, Managing
Partner/Tourism Practice
Daniel Guerrero, Managing Director/Los Angeles

Development Counsellors International (DCI) is the leader in marketing places. Since 1960, our firm has represented more than 450 places around the world, increasing visitor arrivals and investment through economic development and destination marketing. DCI's Tourism Practice delivers tourism research, destination branding, travel and lifestyle public relations/consumer marketing, digital/social media marketing, travel trade marketing/representation and meetings/incentive sales programs to our clients. Our client roster includes some of the most dynamic

destination brands in travel, such as Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company, Visit California, Visit Scotland and the Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau. DCI's destination storytelling approach defines what makes a place unique and results in bringing more visitors to the destinations with which we partner. Our destination marketing work has been recognized annually by the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International, achieving 2016's Best In Show and Platinum awards.

THE DECKER/ ROYAL AGENCY

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Cathleen Decker, President
Stacy Royal, Managing Director

The Decker/Royal Agency is an integrated communications workshop, merging the best of traditional PR tactics with today's evolving platforms to create programs with a singular purpose: measurable results. Founded and wholly owned by industry veterans, Cathleen Decker and Stacy Royal, the company specializes in travel, hospitality, destination management and the relentless pursuit of the things that make life a grand adventure — like finding the love of your life, the story we helped tell at Sandals for Bachelor Ben Higgins and now fiancé Lauren Bushnell on the ABC hit series.

We are an agency committed to keeping our clients in the conversation wherever it may live — online, in print or on-air. We create rich programming from traditional media relations to digital integrations that are designed to complement and enhance clients' overall marketing objectives. Publicity stunts may have their place, but we believe the best PR efforts are part of a thoughtful, deliberate strategy that considers the long view and produces impactful results that move the needle forward.

Since our 2014 launch, Decker/Royal has cultivated a number of tourism, hospitality and lifestyle accounts, including international tour operator, Friendly Planet Travel; boutique hotel specialists, JDB Fine Hotels & Resorts; European city experts, City Wonders; family-friendly Bowling Green, KY and one of the most successful brands in the travel industry: Sandals Resorts International.



Decker/Royal paired cultural phenomenon “The Bachelor” with Sandals Resorts for an editorial primetime broadcast slot reaching the show's all important audiences of women and millennials and surrounding a conversation the resort company owns: romance.

DQMPR

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DQMPR is an award-winning, multi-lingual boutique travel and lifestyle public relations agency, headquartered in New York City with a satellite office in Miami. In efforts to grow and continue meeting clients' needs, the agency is proud to announce the opening of their second satellite office in Denver, Colorado.

Clients rely on the agency's industry experience, informative writing, media event execution, print and online coverage, press trips and trade shows. On top of their reputable media relations services, DQMPR's trade division works, on behalf of their clients with the travel trade, meetings and incentives and the luxury cruise industry.

dustry.

The agency's excellence in public relations has been recognized with 18 Gold Adrian Awards from Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International. Additionally, the Society of American Travel Writers has honored DQMPR with two gold and one silver award for their work for Extraordinary Journeys Africa, Finnair and Tourism Quebec. Most recently, the agency was honored by HSMIA with both a Platinum award for its work in bringing ABC's Ocean Mysteries Saturday morning program to the Saint Lawrence in Quebec- the first time the show filmed in a river. As well as receiving the Gold Award in Public Relations and being awarded three Aaron D Cushman SATW Awards, including Best Campaign for Destination.

Current clientele includes Croisi Europe, EJ Africa, Finnair, Geringer, Perillo Tours, Tourism New Zealand, St. Barth Properties, JourneyYou, and Zicasso.



DQMPR at the 2015 New York Times Travel Show (from left to right): Yves Gentil, Katie Papadopoulos, Andrea Holden, and Stephanie D'Adamo.



Fort Lauderdale Marriott Pompano Beach Resort's "I Do Redo" Facebook contest, designed by Eric Mower + Associates, drew over 60 entries and engagement from Facebook fans vying for a second chance to make their big day perfect. Dustin and Heather Pike submitted a video as their contest entry to tell a story that touched the hearts of many and won the grand prize. The contest grew the resort's Facebook page by 65 percent, and generated over 6.5 million media impressions.

ERIC MOWER + ASSOCIATES

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Yvonne Middleton, Partner
Mary Gendron, Partner
Jay Austin, SVP
Patricia Nugent, SVP

In late 2014, Middleton & Gendron joined Eric Mower + Associates (EMA), a long-established integrated marketing communications agency with nine offices across the North and Southeast regions. Now, as EMA's New York City office, we continue to specialize in travel and tourism with the same senior management team that led Middleton & Gendron. Our combination gives us even deeper roots in PR for destinations, hotels, attractions and other travel-oriented businesses, along with exceptional sophistication in digital, social, marketing, reputation and crisis management, and advertising.

We continue to be well-known

for our influence in such key sectors as hotels and resorts, domestic and foreign destinations, spas, conference and convention centers, professional travel organizations, and hospitality services companies (such as software providers.) We are grateful to our many longstanding clients who want to be challenged by people who have great ideas and the wherewithal to make them happen, who expect well-thought out strategies, not just tactics, and who appreciate our drive and dedication to our partnership with them.

This past year, with a Marriott property in Florida, we launched a highly effective (and award-winning) social campaign called "I Do Re-do" that gave couples whose weddings had misfired the chance to win a do-over. We opened a one-of-a-kind spa facility at a top-ranked resort in Arizona, and we put a lovely new hotel in upstate New York on the map, to cite just a few initiatives.

Our staff is admirable with a shared sense of fun, resourcefulness, and ambition. They are the best at what they do from writing riveting content to being indispensable to reporters to executing flawless promotions and events.



Members of the Fahlgren Mortine tourism team in North Dakota.

EVINS COMMUNICATIONS

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Mathew L. Evins, Chairman
Louise R. Evins, CEO
Kara Terek, SVP/Director of Travel & Hospitality
David Harrison, VP/Director of Digital & Social Integration

We help to define a brand's essence and create emotive experiences that bring brands to life. We utilize brand experiences to catalyze brand passion and engagement. We cultivate and nurture brand engagement to foster brand advocacy and storytelling. We optimize brand mind-share through brand advocacy and storytelling. We transform brand mind-share into brand market-share.

EVINS is the leading branding, marketing, communications and public relations firm in the luxury and prestige sectors, with specialist expertise in travel and hospitality. Over nearly thirty years, we have made an invaluable contribution to the growth and development of numerous industry icons, including American Express Centurion/Platinum, Magazine, CuisinArt Golf Resort & Spa, Hotels & Resorts of Halekulani, Inspitato, Preferred Hotels & Resorts, Rosewood Hotel & Resorts, The Knickerbocker, The Lanesborough, Uniworld River Cruises, and Wheels Up, amongst many others. Our client work has garnered numerous awards and accolades, and we are consistently recognized for excellence in creativity, strategies and tactics.

Mathew Evins, the firm's Chair-

man, has lectured on luxury and hospitality at the Cornell Hotel School and NYU's Graduate School of Business, and has contributed to numerous industry publications and business media. Questex Hospitality + Travel appointed Mr. Evins to serve on the Boards of the International Hotel Investment Forum Berlin (IHIF), the leading international meeting place for the hotel investment community; Luxury Travel Exchange International (LTX), the leading event for today's travel professional focused on luxury and premium niche markets; and ULTRA Luxury Exchange (ULTRA), an invitation-only conference engaging the world's elite travel professionals.

Kara Terek, the division's director, has spent the past 17 years at leading public relations agencies in New York and San Francisco specializing in Travel & Tourism. Terek's experience spans across the industry from executing strategies for tourism boards, international airlines and global hotel brands to creating creative programming and tactics for independent hotels and tour operators.

FAHLGREN MORTINE

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Neil Mortine, President and CEO
Marty McDonald, SVP, Tourism Practice Leader

Fahlgren Mortine works with clients in 29 states and is a top 20 independent firm nationally. The agency has been recognized with dozens of national PR and tourism awards, including Silver and Bronze Anvils from PRSA and a Mercury Award from the U.S.

Travel Association. In 2016, Fahlgren Mortine was recognized with a PRSA Silver Anvil for an integrated marketing campaign on behalf of TravelNevada.

Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, Fahlgren Mortine has locations in West Virginia, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Kentucky, New York and South Carolina. Travel industry client experience includes Office of TourismOhio; Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce/CVB; TravelNevada; Wyoming Office of Tourism; Experience Columbus; Niagara USA; Visit Sun Valley; North Dakota Department of Commerce/Tourism; and many other destinations, regions, hospitality properties and more.

FINN PARTNERS

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Gail L. Moaney, Director & Managing Partner, Travel / Lifestyle Group
Morris Silver, Managing Partner
Virginia M. Sheridan, Managing Partner

The Finn Partners Travel / Lifestyle Group is one of the largest travel practices in the public relations industry. Our team is unrivaled for the creativity, execution and commitment we bring to our clients. Our capabilities and experience have been proven by our successful long term partnerships with some of the world's top travel brands.

We have consistently gained and retained clients through our measurable bottom-line results by comprehending their unique histories, preserving and bolstering their reputations and understanding their vision for the future. Our commitment to our clients is to be an extension of their brands — a true partner in every way. When that commitment is combined with unsurpassed skill and experience in all the critical areas of travel and lifestyle marketing, we deliver results that provide an elevated, long-term brand life, a stronger share of mind and an increased share of market.

Our services include strategic public relations planning and execution, global consumer/travel and trade media relations, crisis communications, reputation management, brand development, social and digital applications, partnership alliances, promotions, special events, hospitality marketing services and social influencer programs.

With a staff of over 50 highly skilled professionals, we represent

airlines, cruise lines, domestic and international destinations, hotels, resorts, rail companies, real estate developers, travel associations and travel service providers. The greatest measure of our success is the satisfaction of our clients, the longevity of our client relationships and the recognition we've received from industry influencers and clients alike for delivering high-quality, substantive work.

FRENCH/WEST/VAUGHAN

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Rick French, Chairman & CEO
David Gwyn, President / Principal
Natalie Best, EVP/Director of Client Services / Principal
Leah Knepper, Associate Vice President & T&T Practice Leader

French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast's leading public relations, public affairs and brand communications agency, independent or otherwise. Founded in April 1997 by Agency Chairman & CEO Rick French, FWV now employs nearly 100 public relations, public affairs, social media, advertising and digital marketing experts at its Raleigh, N.C. headquarters and New York City, Los Angeles, Dallas and Tampa offices.

FWV's dedicated travel and tourism practice, ranked as the 12th largest for Travel and Tourism PR by *O'Dwyer's*, boasts extensive destination marketing experience, specializing in lifestyle and leisure marketing and public relations. Current travel and tourism industry clients include the Dude Ranchers' Association, Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company, Greater Raleigh CVB, Wilmington and Beaches CVB (Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, Wrightsville Beach and Wilmington, N.C. and the Wilmington Convention Center), Tweetsie Railroad, High Gravity Adventures (N.C.) and the Washington Tourism Development Authority (N.C.).

The agency has also done 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; Gatlinburg, Tenn.; Cabarrus County, N.C. — home to NASCAR's Lowe's Motor Speedway; Oakland County, Mich.; Branson, Mo.; the Old Salem Moravian



Members of the Hemsworth Communications team at their Fort Lauderdale, FL headquarters.

Village in N.C.; America's Historic Triangle, located in Williamsburg, Va.; and Trailways Transportation System based in Fairfax, Va.

In addition, FWV's fully integrated creative and digital team provides award-winning advertising, graphic design, and digital and social media services for a wide range of local, national and international clients.

HAWKINS INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Jennifer Hawkins, Founder/Pres.
Corey Finjer-Bennett, SVP

Hawkins International Public Relations represents many of the world's most prestigious travel and hospitality brands. From luxury hotel brands, independent hotels and resorts, cruise lines, airlines, tour operators, spas and lifestyle brands, Hawkins delivers solid results that reflect the agency's passion for travel and global events. Extensive and strong relationships with both traditional and social media are among our greatest assets. Serving as a vital extension of our clients' marketing efforts, Hawkins is renowned for comprehensive media relations strategies, and the ability to engage with key social media influencers and industry tastemakers to form key partnerships. Linked with a global network of like-minded agency partners, Hawkins works with more than 60 clients operating on every continent, developing and implementing strategic campaigns to generate results in top local, regional and national media outlets.

In addition to working with iconic travel and lifestyle brands, the agency has used its trademarked Launch Pad™ strategy to introduce 25 new and repositioned global brands to the North American media market in the past three years alone. The firm's growing Digital Division creates tailored social media campaigns, including multi-channel content development, platform management, influencer campaigns, contests, SEO, webinars, and more. Listed among *Inc.* magazine's prestigious 2014 and 2015 *Inc.* 5000, and in 2014 *Inc.* 500/5000 Fastest Growing Company, Hawkins was most recently voted "Best Company Culture 2015" by The Business Owner's Council.

HEMSWORTH COMMUNICATIONS

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Samantha Jacobs, Founder & President
Michael Jacobs, COO

With headquarters in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and an expanding global presence, Hemsworth Communications is today ranked one of the world's fastest-growing PR agencies. Two years since launching, Hemsworth continues to attract the attention of leading international brands and top PR talent. Why? Because we do things differently.

We take immense pride in the personal relationships we cultivate with our clients and the media. We work tirelessly to help our clients be successful, and we have an unbridled passion for exceeding expectations. While we love insanely cre-

Continued on page 32



J Public Relations Partners Jamie Lynn Sigler and Sarah Evans.

HEMSWORTH COMMS.

— Continued from page 31

ative ideas, flashy media coverage, and awards as much as the next, we care most about how our efforts impact the client's bottom line.

Hemsworth's expertise and connections are diverse, with a focus on travel, tourism, hospitality, real estate and luxury lifestyle PR. Clients include AmaWaterways, Best Western Hotels & Resorts, Margaritaville Holdings (global brand PR, as well as individual resort developments in Hollywood, FL; Grand Cayman; Orlando, FL), Sonesta Coconut Grove, Sonesta Fort Lauderdale Beach, and others.

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Jamie Lynn Sigler, Partner
Sarah Evans, Partner

J Public Relations (JPR) is one of the top hospitality and luxury lifestyle public relations and social media firms in the country. Many of the world's top hospitality brands, luxury hotels, and lifestyle brands have chosen JPR as their partner to tell their stories and connect them with the right media and

influencers. A global force with offices in New York, California and London, JPR cultivates fresh, creative media and social campaigns. The team has an unparalleled passion for achieving press with a purpose — directly impacting a brand's bottom line. The JPR team is experienced with launching brands and maintaining relevancy through newsworthy media campaigns, synergistic brand partnerships and creative programming.

With the creation of 7th & Wit, the agency's in-house social media division run by experts in the fast growing digital space, the team curates content creation, influencer relations and campaigns, and strategic planning. www.seventhandwit.com.

K. SUTHERLAND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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K. Sutherland PR is a boutique public relations agency that specializes in the travel and tourism industry. The global destinations, resorts, and travel brands the agency represents have been featured in some of the most well-known media outlets around the world including placements in *Travel + Leisure*, *Huffington Post*, *Yahoo!*, *CNN*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Fox News*, *MSNBC*, *Playboy* and many more.

The team at K. Sutherland PR executes innovative, personalized and targeted campaigns comprising of both traditional and new media avenues. From international luxury resorts, unique travel destinations, boutique hotels and spas, to travel accessories and world cruise lines, K. Sutherland PR creatively and strategically helps clients achieve positive publicity in a

variety of media outlets.

Everyone within the agency has a deep appreciation and love for travel. The agency's team is multilingual and works with travel clients from around the world. Learn more at ksutherlandpr.com.

KTCPR

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Richard S. Kahn, President
Theresa M. Oakes, Senior Accounts Supervisor
Josh Kahn, Senior Accounts Supervisor

KTCpr is a 26-year-old public relations, marketing and publishing agency founded by Richard S. Kahn, former editor-in-chief and associate publisher of *Travel Agent* magazine. KTCpr has developed its practice around the niche travel and tourism markets with clients in the public and private sectors.

Launched as a "go to" resource for media, KTCpr has become renowned for responsiveness and going "that extra mile" to assist editors with travel stories. KTCpr's expertise covers media relations, the launch of new hotels and resorts, marketing consultation, crisis communication, events, the creation of promotions, social media campaigns, speech writing and publishing services.

KTCpr's current client roster includes Aranui Cruises (Marquesas Islands), Apple Vacations, April Travel Protection, the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association, the Caribbean Tourism Organization, Interval International, Magdalena Grand Beach & Golf Resort (Tobago), the Mango Bay Hotel Group (Barbados), Pacific Delight Tours, Spice Island Beach Resort (Grenada), Travel Impressions, Victoria Cruises, Warwick Paradise Island Bahamas (Bahamas), and Windjammer Landing Villa Beach Resort (St. Lucia).

For more info, call 516-594-4100, email info@KTCpr.com or visit www.KTCpr.com.

LANE

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Wendy Lane Stevens, President
Shannon Riggs, Vice President

LANE delivers results that build

business for clients. Drawing on more than 20 years of experience in the travel and tourism industry, we create integrated public relations strategies that connect with key audiences and stakeholders across all communication channels. We track trends, monitor consumer sentiments, and place stories where key audiences seek information: online, in print or over the airwaves. We reach our clients' audiences wherever they reside, garnering proven results in markets that matter most.

Whether elevating a property or a destination, we use fresh ideas and creative energy to educate, inform and inspire people to action. Our award-winning campaigns have produced measurable results for clients such as Travel Oregon, Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce, Riverhouse on the Deschutes, The Grand America Hotel, The Heathman Hotel Group, Brasada Ranch Resort, Evergreen Wings & Waves Waterpark and Travel Portland.

LAURA DAVIDSON PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Laura Davidson, President
Leslie Cohen, EVP
Meghna Patel, SVP
Sara Geen Hill, SVP

With its headquarters in New York City, LDPR has expanded to have seasoned staff in Los Angeles and Chicago to further its offerings for clients. Guided by industry visionary Laura Davidson, the firm has been at the forefront of many exciting initiatives for global destinations, international hotel companies, independent resorts, luxury tour operators and lifestyle products. The agency is well regarded for its integration of consumer brand partners into PR activations to increase brand awareness and reach beyond the travel media.

LDPR pursues bold approaches that exceed client expectations across all channels. We have an in-house social media manager and a partnership with MARS media agency to implement content development, community and influencer outreach, SEO and contest/

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Celebrity mom La La Anthony is named the 2016 Resident Mom of the Year by Residence Inn, seen here with the LDPR team. LDPR enlisted La La as the brand's honorary mom for 2016 and organized an intimate lunch with the star and deserving moms of the American Red Cross Greater New York at a penthouse suite at Residence Inn New York / Manhattan Midtown East. The campaign generated 38.9+ million media impressions.

Photo credit: Getty



Marketing Maven's Nadia Duwaik (left) and Lindsey Carnett (right) arranged media interviews for Rick Steves (center) as AOR for the Los Angeles Travel and Adventure Show.

LAURA DAVIDSON PR

— Continued from page 32

sweepstakes.

LDPR's unique culture is defined by our collaborative and strategic approach to working with clients, media and our staff, leading to successful long term partnerships.

Our clients include Aman; Abercrombie & Kent; VisitScotland; Sydney/Destination New South Wales, Australia; Travel Portland, Oregon; Bulgari Hotel, London; Curtain Bluff, Antigua; DuVine Cycling + Adventure Co; The Resort at Paws Up, Montana; The Gleneagles Hotel, Scotland; Atlantis Paradise Island, Bahamas; Residence Inn by Marriott; The Ocean House, Watch Hill, Rhode Island; The Ritz-Carlton and JW Marriott Grande Lakes Orlando; Briggs & Riley, among others.

LOU HAMMOND GROUP

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Lou Hammond, Founder/Chairman
Stephen Hammond, CEO
Terence Gallagher, President, New York Office
Gina Stouffer, President, Charleston Office

Enjoying its third decade of service, Lou Hammond Group (LHG) continues to set the standard for travel and hospitality marketing communications. Headquartered in New York, with offices in Charleston, Los Angeles and Miami, the firm has broadened its services in recent years to include digital, branding and integrated marketing capabilities, providing clients comprehensive communications programs. The company's passion, as well as an unwavering commitment to quality, is driven by its legendary founder and chairman, Lou Hammond, who is regarded as one of the most well-known and enthusiastic advocates in the industry. LHG is a recognized leader in the field, as evidenced by its award-winning work. The Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIA) has honored the agency with more of its prestigious Adrian Awards over the past 18 years than any other entrant. Last year was no exception with 17 accolades, including seven gold, eight silver and two bronze.

Americans continue to travel more than ever before as they discover their wonderful country. In 2015, LHG's clients such as the state of Virginia, the counties of Collier and Sonoma, along with the cities of Panama City Beach, Charleston, New Haven, Providence, New Hampshire, and Santa Fe experienced record-breaking years in bed tax revenue. A sampling of new travel accounts include: Brightline, Seatrade Cruise Global, Panama City, Snowmass Tourism, Visit Alexandria, Visit Natchez, The Kimberly Hotel and Warwick Hotels.

LHG recognizes that both media and consumer behavior are rapidly changing and takes an integrated approach to communicating messages across various channels—both traditional and emerging. The agency's dedicated digital team is tasked with keeping a steady eye on the future to discern what's new and meaningful and produces an acclaimed trend-focused newsletter Digital Plus that keeps clients well-informed on the evolving landscape.

The agency continues to partner with leading brands to improve their online presence with tactics ranging from digital audits to full social media takeovers, influencer engagement and ongoing consulting.

MARKETING MAVEN

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Marketing Maven drives brand conversations with traditional travel, hospitality, culinary and lifestyle media, as well as key travel influencers via all social channels. Representing the largest consumer travel show in the nation, Marketing Maven has a strong pulse on

what brand messaging and promotions U.S. travelers want to see to book a trip.

Our travel mavens specialize in developing and executing revenue-generating communications strategies. From the creating of engaging online promotions targeting millennials via social media to specialized trips and tours targeting baby boomers via traditional media, Marketing Maven segments your target demographic by listening to conversations both online and offline, then uses appropriate messaging and mediums to drive action. Marketing Maven also offers a bilingual and bicultural Hispanic marketing department with a real-time pulse on cultural trends and connections to increase brand awareness and drive bookings from U.S. Hispanics.

MISSY FARREN & ASSOCIATES (MFA)

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Missy Farren, Founder & CEO
Agatha Capacchione, SVP
Samantha Lacher, Director

Mfa provides the customer service of a mid-sized agency with the results of a large team through a powerful combination of client service; attention to detail; dynamic, 360-degree campaigns that integrated earned, shared, owned and paid channels; and significant press exposure. Our passion for travel drives professional success and relationships in various niches, including: culinary, Caribbean, ad-

venture, ski/snow, family, romance, arts/culture, wellness/ spa, culture, wine/spirits and fitness/sports. The agency specializes in strategic media relations; social media strategy and management; omni-channel campaign execution; partnership development; event facilitation; spokesperson positioning; and crisis communications. Our team of agile, professional marketers pair innovative thinking and never-say-never attitudes to deliver significant results and exceed expectations. Industry experience includes: Aspen Ski Co.; Cayman Airways; Cayman Cookout; The Cayman Islands Department of Tourism; Charlie Bird Restaurant (NYC); The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Colorado Ski Country; Disneyland; Disneyland Food & Beverage; Golden Horseshoe Golf Club; Gunter Seeger restaurant (NYC); Intrawest; Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month; Limelight Hotel; The Little Nell; The Lodge at Woodloch; Michelin Food & Travel; National Trust for Historic Preservation; Pasquale Jones Restaurant (NYC); The Ritz-Carlton Hotels of New York; Roadtrips Inc.; Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort; Ski Utah; The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg; Squaw Valley; Steamboat; Twin Farms; von Mandl Family Estate wineries; Westin Hotels & Resorts; Whistler Blackcomb; and more.

MMGY GLOBAL

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Clayton Reid, President & CEO
Julie Freeman, EVP & Managing Director, PR, Social & Experiential Marketing
David Perez, VP, PR

At MMGY Global, "We Inspire People To Go Places." As the leading integrated marketing communications firm specializing in the travel, hospitality and entertainment industries for more than 30 years, our mission is to help travel companies grow revenue by motivating their customers. With offices in New York City, Kansas City, Orlando, Ft. Myers and Madrid, and an international partner network, Travel Consul, we serve many of the world's premier travel and tourism brands.

Our integrated public relations and social media team has a track record of developing and implementing award-winning, strategic campaigns that are rooted in re-

search and insights. We are master storytellers and content creators who have deep relationships with media and know how to make news out of simple concepts or large scale programs. Through traditional and social media programs, we forge an emotional connection to reach our audiences where they live, work and play.

We offer personalized, senior level service with the resources of the larger agency in traditional and social consumer and trade media relations, corporate and brand positioning, influencer engagement, partnership and event marketing, promotions, and crisis communications. MMGY is the author of the widely acclaimed Portrait of American Travelers® annual research study.

Our PR clients include cities and states, international destinations, hospitality brands, airlines, iconic attractions, travel technology and services and industry associations.

Other MMGY Global areas of expertise include research and insights, strategic communications planning and implementation, brand marketing, traditional and social media buying, digital/social media strategy, website development and management, e-CRM, and travel industry relations.

MWWPR

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Wendi Shapiro, SVP of Travel and Consumer Lifestyle

MWWPR's Travel & Tourism practice can take you anywhere you want to go. We believe in pushing PR beyond the boundaries of expected thinking to create attention-grabbing communications campaigns. We draw from an experienced and talented team that continually exceeds client expectations by delivering strategic and creative plans.

As a leading global independent communications agency, MWWPR develops award-winning campaigns powered by insights, technology and social media to drive patronage and connect clients with their key stakeholders. MWWPR's deep bench of hospitality experts is connected with the industry's most respected influencers and is deeply knowledgeable on the trends that are shaping the media landscape today. We've worked with both



MMGY Global is the agency of record for the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau, a Southwest Florida destination known for its world-class shelling. MMGY conceptualized the first annual National Seashell Day, declared by the destination as a holiday on June 20, the first day of summer. We kicked it off with a live broadcast on ABC's Good Morning America with weather anchor Ginger Zee along with corresponding PR and Social programming that lead to coverage in/on Huffington Post, Smithsonian Magazine, Lonely Planet Magazine, Orbitz, Coastal Living and TravelPulse, among others.

established and emerging brands within the travel industry, ranging from hotels and destinations, to airlines, online travel agencies and travel publishers. Services include strategic partnerships, visiting media programs, key executive/spokesperson industry positioning, celebrity and athlete seeding and referrals. Our team of top hospitality industry strategists, planners, media specialists and producers has years of deep-rooted experience in travel and tourism.

At MWWPR, we believe you need to be relevant to Matter More™ to the people who matter most. Our strategic process begins with understanding client business objectives and priorities, mapping the influencers that have the greatest impact on your brand and developing measurable programs that drive business outcomes. Every client program begins with insights based on proprietary research to shape a point of view and determine what Matters Most to a brand's key audiences.

MYRIAD

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Al Merschen, President
Julie Averay-Cuesta, VP

Myriad is a Public Relations and Marketing agency. We are headquartered in Los Angeles, with offices in New York City. Myriad represents more international destinations than any other company in

the U.S.

We are 100% travel and for over twenty five years our creative integration of public relations, marketing and advertising, reinforced with our cooperative partnership capabilities, has led to a results driven approach that makes a quantitative difference. We understand B2B, B2C, G2B and every other acronym you know!

Our clients span the gamut of the international travel industry, ranging from tourist boards, cruise companies, airlines, railways and tour operators. Our bicoastal teams are well positioned to gauge the pulse of the nation and provide strategic direction and strong tactical public relations solutions for our travel and tourism clients.

The Myriad difference is our combination of strategic and tactical approach, with a complete range of integrated services that strengthen our public relations initiatives: Public Relations, Event Management, Brand Positioning and Management, Online and Social Media Marketing, Cooperative Partnership Marketing, Direct & Digital Marketing, Print and Broadcast Advertising, Media Planning and Buying, Market Research, Crisis Management

We strive to be a "cut above," with creative integrated solutions for customized public relations, social media and on and offline marketing campaigns. We consistently achieve high visibility broadcast, print and online coverage, creating buzz and awareness for our clients and ultimately driving up visitor

— Continued on page 36



NJFPR wellness enthusiasts organize *Organic Spa Magazine's* 2016 media marketplace

MYRIAD

Continued from page 35

numbers.

We are a mid size agency that really cares about heads in beds, boots on the ground and bums on seats! We have the in-house resources and expertise to achieve big results. Clients include: Australia, Northern Territory, Macao Government Tourism, Costa Mesa, Kyoto, Kenya, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Nicaragua, Qatar, Hawaii, Taiwan Tourist Board EVA Air, Fiji Airways, Signature Travel Network, Cunard, Princess Cruises and more.

NANCY J. FRIEDMAN PUBLIC RELATIONS, INC.

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Nancy J. Friedman, President

Dozens of hotel, destination and

lifestyle brands have entrusted their reputations to Nancy J. Friedman Public Relations, whose "Leave No Stone Unturned" philosophy has catapulted the firm to the top of the category in hospitality and travel. For those seeking senior level counsel, unwavering brand advocacy and unrivaled media savvy, NJFPR is a one-stop shop. An industry thought leader and self-described "media junkie with wanderlust," Nancy and her team pride themselves on long-standing client relationships and an innate ability to move within many spheres: tapping media influencers, forging creative partnerships, uncovering strategic advantages, and providing global perspective. NJFPR expanded its powerful national presence with the opening of its LA office in 2014, an additional satellite team in Boston and heralded a new chapter in its international reach with a dedicated U.K. liaison, to further widen the agency's footprint to better connect clients to the media conversation gone global.

Clients: The Asbury, Asbury Park, NJ; BodyHoliday, St. Lucia; Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa, Atlantic City; Brooklyn Bread Lab; Canyon Ranch Wellness Resorts;

Condado Vanderbilt, San Juan, Puerto Rico; Cooperstown, New York; Copamarina Beach Resort & Spa, Guanica, Puerto Rico; Courtyard by Marriott Isla Verde Beach Resort, Puerto Rico; Destination DC; Dermot Real Estate, New York; Gansevoort Meatpacking, New York; Gansevoort Park Avenue New York; Gansevoort Turks + Caicos; Hollywood Proper Residences, Los Angeles; Hotel Commonwealth, Boston; Hotel El Convento, San Juan, Puerto Rico; Hotel Week NYC; Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort Casino & Spa; iStar / Asbury Park waterfront, Asbury Park, NJ; JW Marriott Camelback Inn Resort & Spa, Scottsdale; La Concha Resort: A Renaissance Hotel, San Juan, Puerto Rico; Marmara Park Avenue, New York; Refinery Hotel, New York; St. Petersburg/Clearwater, Florida; Taconic, Manchester Village, VT; The Bowery Hotel, New York; The Jane, New York; The Lodge, Sea Island, GA; The Ludlow, New York; The Maritime Hotel, New York; The Pod 39 Hotel, New York; The Pod Hotel, New York; The Plymouth Hotel, Miami, FL; The Roxy, New York; The Water Club — A Signature Hotel by Borgata; Wild Walk, Adirondacks, NY; Williamsburg Hotel, Brooklyn New York.

PADILLACRT

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PadillaCRT.com

Lynn Casey, Chair and CEO

PadillaCRT is a top 10 independent public relations and communications company. Its 240 employee owners use insightful strategies to help clients develop purposeful connections with the people who are important to their success. The company's 360-degree approach uses research, brand strategy, advertising, design, digital, social, mobile, media relations, events and crisis management expertise to build corporate and product brands with customers, investors, employees and communities.

Brand consultancy Joe Smith and market research firm SMS Research Advisors are integral parts of PadillaCRT. FoodMinds, an award-winning food and nutrition communications and consulting company, is a wholly owned division of PadillaCRT.

In the travel and tourism sector, PadillaCRT has worked with a variety of clients including Houston Convention and Visitor Bureau and

Arizona Office of Tourism.

Other clients include 3M, Barnes & Noble Education, BASF, Bayer, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, GE, Hass Avocado Board, Land O'Lakes, Mayo Clinic, Prosciutto di Parma, Rockwell Automation, U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, the Virginia Lottery, Wines from Rioja (Spain) and Xcel Energy.

PadillaCRT is a founding member of the Worldcom Public Relations Group, a partnership of 111 independently owned partner offices in 140 cities on six continents. Make a connection at padillacrt.com.

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Steve Cody, Co-CEO and Co-Founder
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Ted Birkhahn, partner & president
Ann Barlow, partner & president, West Coast
Deborah Brown, partner & managing director
Jacqueline Kolek, partner & managing director
Maggie O'Neill, partner & managing director

Peppercomm is an independently owned 20-year-old integrated communications and marketing agency headquartered in New York with offices in San Francisco and London. Founded in 1995 by Steve Cody and Ed Moed, Peppercomm began as a B2B PR agency with a focus on financial and professional services and technology. Today, it has grown to include travel, lifestyle, retail, wellness and consumer brand experience.

Helping clients see around the corner and determine what's next sets Peppercomm apart from other integrated communications and marketing firms. It enables us to push boundaries while mitigating risk for clients in financial and professional services, consumer, B-to-B and multi-industry sectors. Our integrated team of specialists work together to create cohesive campaigns that leverage the right communications and marketing vehicles across all touchpoints.

Our unique approach and dynamic workplace attract the best talent who, in turn, help us win and retain the best clients. While we've won countless awards, we're most proud of being named Best Place to



Quinn won VisitLEX with an art and tourism idea around American Pharoah, the first horse to win the "Grand Slam" of horse racing. VisitLEX joins Quinn's growing roster of destinations.

Work in New York City by *Crain's New York Business* and a Best Workplace for Women by *Great Place to Work®* and *Fortune*.

Our love of what we do combined with years of deep category experience shapes our work. We engage audiences on every level and set your brand apart. And we do all this to help your bottom-line and build your business. So get in touch. We're all ears.

QUINN

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Quinn is a lifestyle public relations agency with global impact. We work across multiple communications channels with content creation and distribution as well as partnerships, events, creative and sales-driven PR to produce work that is highly effective — and measurable. Quinn's innovative ideas have resulted in a number of industry "firsts."

Our strategic approach to PR has also built some of the largest audiences in the world. Staffers in New York and Miami, along with global affiliates, serve clients in Travel, Spa, Food/Wine/Spirits, Retail, Architecture/Art/Design, Lifestyle and Real Estate.

We believe there is magic to be found at the intersection of creative thinking and business-driving strategies. Many of the world's most recognized brands believe as well.

RBB

COMMUNICATIONS

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Christine Barney, CEO
Lisa Ross, President & Travel Practice Leader
Tina Elmowitz, EVP
John Quinn, EVP

rbb is an integrated marketing communications firm and four-time Agency of the Year. As the Champion of Breakout Brands, rbb

Communications inspires companies with insights on creating customer passion to increase sales.

rbb's Travel & Leisure Practice develops award-winning campaigns that spark new conversations, inspire action and drive meaningful business results. The agency's deep hospitality experience comes from working with companies from all industry segments from global hotel chains, boutique resorts and destinations to airlines, cruise lines and online travel agencies. Whether a client's goal is to gain more market share, increase bookings or online engagement, enhance its reputation or all of the above, rbb will get them there faster and smarter.

The rbb difference is our customized, integrated approach to marketing communications. Our public relations, creative and digital teams leverage the right mix of communication channels, partnership activations, design, media relations, influencer and celebrity engagement, content creation and social media strategies, digital marketing, and research/analytics to effectively deliver measurable outcomes that build brands.

This year, rbb's work with client Hampton by Hilton to create the "Seekender" campaign earned the *Holmes Report's* Gold SABRE Award in consumer media, HSMIA Gold and Silver Adrian Awards in PR and digital marketing and a Platinum MarCom award. In a short period, the innovative influencer program increased weekend bookings across the brand's portfolio by two percent, drove up website traffic by nearly 17 percent, and increased engagement across social media channels by 14.5 percent. Success metrics like these is why companies such as AMResorts, Embassy Suites, Hilton Garden Inn, Homewood Suites, Virgin Cruises and others, choose rbb.

Other firm specialty practices include consumer products/services, food & beverage, health, higher education, professional services and real estate. Find out how rbb can help your brand breakout by visiting www.rbbcommunications.com or call Lisa Ross, President, at (305) 448-7457.

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Victoria Feldman de Falco,



On behalf of Visit Wales, in January 2016 Spring O'Brien secured in-studio/test kitchen cooking demonstrations for Welsh "Royal Chef" Penny Lewis with "CBS Morning News" where she showcased some of the notable dishes she has served to Queen Elizabeth II and the British royal family during private dinner parties. Pictured here from left to right following the 10-minute CBS segment are Penny Lewis and anchors Andrea Grymes and Diane Macedo.

Principal
Christina Miranda, Principal

Specializing in travel, hospitality, interior design, and home furnishings, Redpoint is a full service marketing PR firm with 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, Woodstock Inn & Resort, VT; US Tour Operations Association; Hidden Pond Resort, ME; The Tides Beach Club, ME; Morey's Piers and Beachfront Waterparks: The Dylan Hotel, Amsterdam; Discovery Map International; Topnotch Resort & Spa, VT; Main Street Hospitality Group, MA; Taste of Nova Scotia; and Miramichi River Tourism Association, NB.

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.

SPRING O'BRIEN

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Chris Spring, President
Lauren Kaufman, SVP

We love travel. It's who we are; it's what we have exclusively specialized in for over three decades, offering clients across every segment of the industry our award-winning expertise, creating integrated

marketing communication solutions that move the needle, yield positive media coverage and achieve discernable ROI. We welcome and thrive on challenges, and bring a great deal of experience, energy, creativity and ideas to the table.

As we catapult client brands beyond the fray, our sweet spots are: providing expert strategic counsel, developing customized public relations programs, achieving big results with broadcast, print and online coverage, developing

Continued on page 38



Redpoint sent Morey's Piers & Beachfront Waterparks "To the Dogs" with the idea to transform the season's closing day of this legendary Wildwood NJ waterpark into a splashy playground for dogs & their owners. Media loved it, and dog owners eagerly opened their hearts and wallets to attend. It's now a profitable and media-worthy annual event.

SPRING O'BRIEN

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low-cost/high-impact sweepstakes, promotions, strategic alliances and packages, conceptualizing and executing inventive special events, and growing fans and followers on social media platforms.

Managing clients big and small including tourism boards, hotels and resorts, cruise lines, airlines, railways, tour operators, websites and attractions, our integrated solutions create buzz, increase awareness, and get more people traveling — which is the bottom line.

Spring O'Brien is a Myriad company.

Clients: Argyle International Airport, Blue Diamond Resorts, China National Tourist Office, Eurail, Harley-Davidson Museum, Homestay.com, Iceland Naturally, ITC Hotels Luxury Collection, MedjetAssist, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Tourism Authority, SuperClubs' Breezes Resorts & Spas and Visit South Walton.

TJM COMMUNICATIONS

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Treva J. Marshall, President

TJM Communications is an award-winning boutique lifestyle public relations firm specializing in travel, food, wine and the arts.

Since 2001, the agency has serviced international and domestic clients from its Orlando, Florida location and is a proud recipient of multiple Hospitality Sales and Marketing International (HSMIA) Adrian Awards for Public Relations. As a boutique agency, we focus on delivering personalized service with an emphasis on innovation, creativity and strategy. Comprised of a team of seasoned communications professionals, we are especially proud of the diverse nature of our company, with staff members representing origins from around the globe.

TJM Communications has been called upon to service clients in Spain, South Africa, Canada and throughout the United States. We have represented domestic and international destinations, hotels and major tourism entities. Our travel

practice currently includes clients such as: Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort, Westgate River Ranch Resort, along with other noted hotels, resorts and tourist attractions.

TURNER

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Christine Turner, President
Mariana DiMartino, SVP
Angela Berardino, Chief Strategy + Integration Officer

TURNER is a progressive communications agency dedicated to the intersection of earned, owned and paid media strategy. Specializing in travel and lifestyle brands, we represent some of the world's best hotel, resort, destination, fashion, active and modern outdoor brands. Our clients include all of the places you'd like to travel, and what you'd pack for those journeys.

We have three U.S. offices in New York, Chicago and Denver to best service our worldwide clients based in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Europe, Caribbean and South America. Founded in 1997, our tenured team of talented veterans has a passion for travel and active lifestyles. We live and breathe our clients' cultures and deliver meaningful results from our deep industry relationships with journalists and influencers.



Christine Turner, President of **Turner, A Fahlgren Mortine Company**

Our dedicated 360 approach to delivering integrated public relations, digital, content and social media campaigns continues to deliver bottom-line results for our clients through powerful media ex-

posure, influencer followings and consumer engagement. We are a relationship agency, acting as in-house support for our clients, and we are proud of our culture — we work hard, we get results and we give back.

WEBER SHANDWICK

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Alice Diaz, EVP
adiaz@webershandwick.com

The Weber Shandwick Travel & Lifestyle practice is the leading specialist in travel and tourism public relations. Our practice operates like a boutique shop within one of the most creative global communications agencies in the world creating programs that integrate social, digital, content, publishing, advertising, corporate reputation, public affairs and public relations. Weber Shandwick has moved beyond traditional boundaries to deliver unconventional thinking and business solutions that help clients out-perform competitors.

We know the traveler's purchase journey is often a long one; it begins months before the plane departs or the ship sails and wanders a unique path to purchase. Our mission is to create programs that target consumers and deliver inspiration to them early and often. For Mexico City our work helped propel the story of the city's eclectic culture of art, architecture, cuisine and design from obscurity to the top the *New York Times* list of "52 Places to Travel in 2016."

Digital media platforms open new opportunities for us to influence consumers through innovative storytelling and content strategy that reaches them in a highly fragmented media marketplace. We've proven the success of content creation and know how to blend the right mix of paid, owned and earned programs. We inspire. We incite. We shape ideas to move travel and lifestyle businesses forward with smart programs that reach consumers where they are today — on smartphones and tablets — with content that is relevant to their lifestyle. And above all, we are committed to be "engaging always."

WEILL

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Geoffrey Weill, President
Ann-Rebecca Laschever, EVP
Mark Liebermann, SVP
Nestor Lara Baeza, VP

During its more than 20 years in business, Geoffrey Weill Associates, a New York-based boutique firm specializing in authentic, upscale travel experiences and tourism, has developed a reputation for candidness, creativity, and originality. Weill clients are embracing sustainable luxury--through large and small ecological endeavors--thinking long term about their impact on their local communities as well as on their beautiful locations. QT Hotel Sydney and venerable Swiss hotels, the Beau-Rivage Palace and Baur au Lac developed hotel beehives to counter the worldwide threat to the survival of the honeybee, which is responsible for pollinating fruits, vegetables and nuts and is an integral part of the human food chain. The elegant Hassler Roma is doing its part by providing an electric car for guests and to reduce carbon admissions in the historic city center, while green operating practices such as energy and water-saving projects are standard at the Conservatorium Amsterdam.

Conservation programs are an integral part of several clients' ethos. Inkaterra in Peru has an extensive program of conservation including a rescue center for the Andean Spectacled bear, conservation of over 30,000 acres of Amazon forest, as well as a native orchid conservation effort that includes 372 species of the plant; Ted Turner Expeditions continues its commitment to responsible land management and increasing American bison herds; Aqua Expeditions, whose entire fleet of cruise ships on the Mekong and Amazon rivers have low emission engines and are proponents of responsible eco-tourism and wildlife preservation initiatives including the restoring of the taricaya turtle population in Peru's Amazon; and Weill's newest client, Soneva — resorts in the Maldives and Thailand whose barefoot luxury platform supports bio-awareness and eco-friendly practices.

WEILL continues to expand its luxury portfolio and find ways to showcase the strengths of its properties. Through television, magazines shoots and internet exposure through appropriate blogs, website and social media including Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. ○

O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

TRAVEL AND TOURISM PR FIRMS

Firm		Net Fees (2015)	Firm		Net Fees (2015)
1. Edelman	New York, NY	\$29,257,353	21. North 6th Agency (N6A)	New York, NY	717,461
2. Zimmerman Agency	Tallahassee, FL	10,400,000	22. Moore Communications Group	Tallahassee, FL	581,250
3. APCO Worldwide	Washington, DC	9,809,400	23. Hemsworth Communications	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	495,500
4. Development Counsellors Int'l	New York, NY	9,617,526	24. Status Labs	Austin, TX	482,799
5. Lou Hammond & Associates	New York, NY	6,715,030	25. McNeely Pigott & Fox PR	Nashville, TN	469,405
6. Turner, a Fahlgren Mortine co.	New York, NY	6,090,257	26. WE	Bellevue, WA	347,000
7. Finn Partners	New York, NY	5,558,000	27. Red Sky PR	Boise, ID	282,583
8. J Public Relations	New York, NY	5,269,529	28. LEVICK	Washington, DC	265,205
9. Hawkins Int'l Public Relations	New York, NY	3,988,822	29. Sachs Media Group	Tallahassee, FL	225,828
10. Nancy J. Friedman PR Inc.	New York, NY	3,840,000	30. TransMedia Group	Boca Raton, FL	201,446
11. Quinn	New York, NY	3,100,859	31. Marketing Maven PR	Camarillo, CA	148,459
12. French West Vaughan	Raleigh, NC	2,987,772	32. Butin Integrated Comms.	St. Simons Isl., GA	126,798
13. Zeno Group	New York, NY	2,816,312	33. Didit Communications, LLC	New York, NY	100,500
14. Jackson Spalding	Atlanta, GA	2,491,331	34. The Hodges Partnership	Richmond, VA	81,000
15. rbb Public Relations	Miami, FL	2,277,908	35. Public Communications Inc.	Chicago, IL	45,000
16. 5W Public Relations	New York, NY	1,900,000	36. Stuntman PR	New York, NY	45,000
17. Coyne PR	Parsippany, NJ	1,241,360	37. Peppercomm	New York, NY	15,000
18. LANE	Portland, OR	856,306	38. Maccabee	Minneapolis, MN	8,150
19. PadillaCRT	Minneapolis, MN	741,860	39. AMP3 Public Relations	New York, NY	7,431
20. Taylor	New York, NY	730,000	40. SPM Communications	Dallas, TX	3,500

The Donald Trump media relations quiz

By Fraser Seitel

Donald Trump has a “hate/hate” relationship with the media. Most recently, he “revoked” the *Washington Post*’s press credentials at his campaign events on the grounds that the venerable newspaper’s coverage of him was “incredibly inaccurate.” In its banishment, the *Post* joined BuzzFeed, Politico, *The Daily Beast*, Univision, *Huffington Post* and a growing list of other outlets in the Trump penalty box.



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

That candidate, of course, isn’t alone in loathing the press. An increasing number of Americans — approximately 60 percent, according to the latest Gallup Poll — distrust the media. For the past decade, in fact, trust in the media has drifted

steadily downward, the result not only of mounting doubt regarding most American institutions but also due to the media’s special problems with lying (think Brian Williams) and bias (think MSNBC and Fox News).

Sadly, among those who evidently share Trump’s dismal view of the media are many public relations professionals, the very people whose traditional responsibility was to deal with journalists. No less a public relations sage than the inestimable Jack O’Dwyer has regularly lamented the waning interest of media relations among public relations practitioners.

But in this case at least, Jack is right and you are wrong.

Like it or not, the mainstream media — particularly *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today* and network news — still hold great sway in impacting the nation’s news agenda. The same is true for local newspapers in their communities. When it makes the front page of the paper, people start talking and social media starts buzzing.

So, if you’re in public relations, you better know how to deal with the press, if for no other reason than your boss expects you to be an “expert.”

To find out if you are, take the yes-or-no

Donald Trump media quiz posted below and find out.

Questions

1. When addressing a reporter, should you use his or her first name?
2. Should you ever challenge a reporter in a verbal duel?
3. Are reporters correct in thinking that they can ask embarrassing questions of anyone in authority?
4. Should you answer a hypothetical question?
5. Should you ever say “No comment?”
6. Do people remember the content of an interview or speech?
7. Should an official ever admit he or she has had professional training to handle the media?
8. If you don’t know the correct answer to a reporter’s question, should you try to answer it anyway?

Bonus Question

What did Henry Kissinger say at the start of his press briefings as Secretary of State?

Answers

1. Yes. In most cases, using first names is the best strategy. It makes the discussion much more conversational and less formal than using Mr. or Ms. Even Donald Trump subscribes to this approach.
2. No. You can and should challenge a faulty premise. But most people should try to gain goodwill in an interview. This is rarely achieved by getting into an acrimonious debate. Trump, of course, violates this principle every time he opens his big yap.
3. Yes. A journalist’s job is to challenge talking points and rehearsed answers, to get at the real truth. Public relations people, by contrast, counsel clients to “stay on message.” So don’t take it personally if reporters aren’t nice to you and your client. Trump, of course, takes everything personally!
4. No. Avoid hypothetical questions. Rarely can you win by dealing with them. Trump answers them all the time.
5. No. According to research, when people hear you say, “No comment,” they believe you are “guilty.” You appear to be hiding something. Here, candidate Trump is pristine. He has a “comment” for anything!
6. No. Research indicates that audiences remember less and less as time wears on. What people do “remember,” thanks primarily to YouTube and social media, are “sound bytes.” That’s why it makes sense to thoughtfully design these and pepper them

strategically throughout an interview. Trump “peppers,” but there doesn’t appear to be much “strategy” lurking behind his typical verbal fusillade.

7. Yes. By all means. They should point out that good communication with the public is a hallmark of their organization and that they give it high priority. Trump prides himself on listening to no one, especially including his precious few public relations “advisors.”

8. No. Don’t be afraid to say, “I don’t know.” Offer to find the answer and get back to the interviewer. Don’t dig yourself into a hole you can’t get out of. When you misspeak today, it’s off-and-running on social media before the interview is concluded. Trump, again by contrast, generally knows everything about everything.

Bonus answer:

“Does anyone have any questions . . . for my answers?” ○

PR news brief

PadillaCRT purchases FoodMinds

PadillaCRT, one of the largest independent PR agencies in the Midwest, has acquired food and nutrition communications and consulting shop FoodMinds LLC. The merger effectively establishes Minneapolis-based PadillaCRT as one of the largest independent food and beverage agencies in the country.

Chicago-based FoodMinds was founded in 2006. The agency, which staffs 35, opened a Washington D.C. office in 2014 and a San Francisco outpost the following year. Clients include General Mills, Monsanto, Nestlé and Welch’s, among others. FoodMinds in 2015 accounted for nearly \$8.3 million in food-related net fees, ranking as one of O’Dwyer’s top-five firms for food and beverage PR.

FoodMinds will now operate as a division of PadillaCRT and will collaborate on joint assignments with that agency’s existing food and beverage practice, whose clients include U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, Prosciutto di Parma, the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers, Les Vins Georges Duboeuf and Wines from Rioja. Aside from the removal of the LLC designation, the FoodMinds name will remain the same, and agency staff and office locations will not be affected by the acquisition. FoodMinds partners Laura Cubillos, Bill Layden and Sue Pitman now take the title of PadillaCRT executive vice presidents.

Cubillos, who co-founded the agency, told O’Dwyer’s that FoodMinds is “thrilled to team up with an independent, well-established firm that shares our values and counsels its clients courageously.”

PadillaCRT, which maintains additional offices in New York, Los Angeles and Alexandria and Richmond, VA, was founded in 1961. Formerly known as Padilla Speer Beardsley, the Minneapolis-based agency in 2013 acquired Richmond, VA-based shop CRT/tanaka, a merger that birthed the Padilla CRT name. The agency in 2015 accounted for nearly \$35 million in net fees, according to O’Dwyer’s rankings of PR firms.

Goodwill during the sale of a PR agency

By Richard Goldstein

It seems to me that the PR merger/acquisition market is hot again. Many larger agencies are acquiring smaller ones. If you think about it, the most significant asset that a PR agency has to sell is goodwill. There is not a heavy investment in tangible property for most agencies.



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

Business goodwill is an intangible asset that represents the portion of a business value that cannot be attributable to other assets. For the vast majority of service businesses, it's their most significant as-

set that will be transferred to the buyer.

The factors that contribute to the creation of business goodwill includes: on-going concern value, excess business income and the expectation of future economic benefits.

For example, David Jones PR Inc. is a \$4 million revenue PR agency doing business as a corporation. The profitability of the agency is approximately \$1.3 million and it's valued at approximately \$7.0 million (somewhat less than five times earnings). The net asset of the agency, assets minus liabilities, is about \$1.5 million. Most of the assets consist of cash, accounts receivable and furniture and equipment. The liabilities are accounts payable and taxes payable. Whether or not you agree with the valuation is not relevant. What is relevant is that \$5.5 million that's being sold is nowhere to be found on the balance sheet. This excess is generally considered "goodwill."

The sale of goodwill is considered the sale of an intangible asset of DJPR. If DJPR is a C corporation, the sale is taxable to the corporation. Because there is no distinction between corporate income tax rates of ordinary income or capital gain, the sale of the goodwill will be taxed at 35 percent. Unfortunately for David Jones, he will have to pay tax on the distribution of the sales proceeds he receives due to the sale.

In other words, there is "double" taxation on the sale. In order to reduce or eliminate this double taxation, David Jones may insist on the sale of his corporate stock to the buyer. The advantage of this is he will only

have to pay tax once on the sale of stock.

The buyer, if you will, will step into his shoes and become the owner of DJPR. Generally, buyers try and avoid the purchase of stock for two reasons: the basis of the assets are less than the selling price (outside basis is higher than the inside basis of the assets), and the buyer will receive no tax benefit on the purchase (note: there are planning techniques that can possibly work around this by making elections under Section 338 of the Internal Revenue Code which is beyond the scope of this column).

Secondly, buyers are nervous about future liabilities that aren't known at the date of acquisition. For example, assume DJPR was sold in 2013. In 2015, the IRS decided to audit the 2012 and 2013 tax returns of DJPR. The buyer, as the owner of DJPR, must handle the audit and pay any tax liability deemed owed. Of course, lawyers try to protect the buyer by placing a portion of the purchase price in escrow and other techniques.

If DJPR is an S corporation, life is easier. Generally, the sale of assets of an S corporation is taxed only once to the seller. The exception to this rule is the built-in gains tax in an S corporation liquidation. While this subject is beyond the scope of this column, it is suffice to say, if DJPR was never a C corporation from its inception, no built-in gains tax will result.

Another problem area is the possibility that the S election is not recognized by a state and/or local jurisdiction. For example, New York City does not recognize S corporation status. Therefore, as far as New York City is concerned, DJPR is a C corporation. Therefore, the sale of DJPR will be taxable at the corporate level and again at the individual tax level to a resident of New York City.

Personal goodwill

In the sale of a PR agency, the goodwill of the agency, if attributable to the owner — in this case David Jones — may be treated as an asset sold by the owner. In this case, a double tax inflicted on the sale of the C Corporation will be eliminated or reduced. The personal goodwill is not considered a sale of a corporation asset and is not subject to double taxation or the built-in gains tax as mentioned above. The gain will be considered a capital gain subject to tax at the capital gains tax rate rather than the ordinary income tax rate. Keep in mind that a portion of the consideration may be in the form of a covenant not to compete or

to contractually bind David Jones to perform consultation services to the purchaser of the agency. These types of arrangements will be subject at ordinary income not capital gains tax rates.

Net investment income tax

I'm sure that many readers of this column are familiar with the net investment income tax by now. The Internal Revenue Code in 2010 by way of Section 1411 added a tax on net investment forms of income. Therefore, interest, dividends and capital gains are generally subject to a 3.8 percent additional tax above a certain threshold. Net investment income includes net gains from the disposition of property except to the extent attributable to a trade or business that is not a passive activity. The activity of a C corporation is not a trade or business to David Jones, DJPR's owner. The gain on the sale of corporate stock, see above, is considered net investment income and therefore subject to the 3.8 percent tax. If personal goodwill is sold as part of the sale of DJPR, the gain should not be subject to the 3.8 percent tax. Evidence that personal goodwill exists is supported if the shareholders negotiate the sale of goodwill separately from the sale of corporate assets.

The issue of business versus personal goodwill should be reviewed by your tax advisor before, not after a contract is negotiated and signed. ○

Media news brief

Online ad revenues hit Q1 record

U.S. digital advertising revenues accounted for \$15.9 billion in 2016's first quarter, according to a report by ad organization the Interactive Advertising Bureau.

Those numbers are the highest first quarter on record for the industry, and represent a 21-percent climb in Internet ad revenues from 2015's Q1 figures of \$13.2 billion. That year-over-year surge is the sharpest first quarter uptick seen in four years, according to the IAB.

The numbers follow 2015's record breaking fourth-quarter revenues of \$17.4 billion, which resulted in a historic \$59.6 billion in industry revenues for that year. The IAB in December 2015 also reported that U.S. advertising revenues had totaled \$15 billion in 2015's third quarter, at that time the highest quarter since the research organization began tracking this data in 1996.

The findings appear in the IAB's latest Internet Advertising Report, a quarterly estimate of U.S. interactive advertising revenues. That report is sponsored by the IAB and conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers US.

Understanding the past can help management forge future



"Start with The Future and Work Back: A Heritage Management Manifesto"
Hamilton Books, Falls Village, CT
(April 18, 2016)
200 pages
ISBN: 0761867554

By Caitlin Philippo

Bruce Weindruch, founder and CEO of Washington, D.C.-based firm The History Factory, has formalized his workplace philosophy with Hamilton Books' new release "Start with The Future and Work Back: A Heritage Management Manifesto."

Weindruch, who founded the The History Factory in 1979, has based his company around the idea of heritage management. He describes this philosophy as "the discipline that leverages and organizes its inventory of experience — its stories, its icons, its lessons learned — so that they can use those to address either the challenges or opportunities of growth."

Weindruch's career has included stints advising top tier companies such as Gold-

man Sachs, Microsoft and Pfizer, often citing that a company need only look back to inspire advancement.

The manifesto hones in on practical techniques that can be applied in the workplace on both micro and macro levels to increase consumer visibility and connect initiatives to a larger audience. With countless examples of industry successes, Weindruch uses these real-life cases while tracing how to use a company's history to create a specific narrative to draw in the consumer. Readers might want to take note: with a large section of the country experiencing an economic downturn and the volatility of new media platforms, Weindruch's suggestions offer solutions to cash strapped industries.

Weindruch highlights something that, while approaching common knowledge with its simplicity, could be a critical aspect of humanizing companies that can often be considered faceless.

"Heritage is a resource an organization already owns and its abundant — they don't have to buy it, they don't have to go out and get it, its already there." And he isn't wrong: while the idea of adding more humanistic traits to businesses as a way of gaining consumer sympathy isn't exactly breaking news, he notes the advantage of using a company's individual narrative and

history to differentiate them from their peers. It highlights them as a unique entity with a visible identity and encourages brand loyalty. With the constant flux of new content and rapid business with new media expansion, this approach can lead to a competitive edge that, if successful, can help attain brand recognition in a sympathetic light.

Weindruch's laymen style explanation of how to put this ideal into practice allows his words to be applicable to multiple industries at multiple levels. His advice is timely, honing in on the sort of cultural backlash that has been occurring in response to the unprecedented surge of consumer approaches through new media.

At the end of the day, elements of humanity and connections to them has been proven to sustain connection to the consumer, and it is this approach over others that Weindruch encourages in 'Start with the Future and Work Back: A Heritage Management Manifesto.'

Caitlin Philippo is an Editorial Assistant at O'Dwyer's. ○



Bruce Weindruch

Disney's reputation will endure tragedy

By Ronn Torossian

June was a difficult month one for Disney: even though they successfully opened their 43-percent-owned Shanghai Disney in China, that bit of good news was overshadowed by the recent problems in Orlando.

Between the shooting at the Pulse nightclub — not owned by Disney — and the tragic alligator incident that left two-year-old Lane Graves dead, Disney was put on a hard road toward reputation recovery. Then the rumors that the Pulse nightclub terrorist, Omar Mateen, previously considered and scouted Disney World as a possible target caused Disney to almost turn into Grimm's fairy tales overnight.

Barring another major tragedy, Disney will get through this with very little loss to its bottom line. The reason for that is centered on Disney's always-proactive efforts to create a positive experience for its visitors. It could be expected that visiting a theme park the size of any Disney facility is likely to be good medicine for a resounding majority of visitors, but Disney makes the extra effort at every turn.

First, Disney is aware of the communities where their parks are located and actively look for ways to contribute. When problems strike, they double up on those efforts. So almost immediately after the Pulse shooting, Disney established a \$1 million fund to help those who had been affected. They also tightened security and added metal detectors to their parks all around the world.

As headlines arrived regarding a little boy snatched by an alligator at the Seven Seas Lagoon, Disney closed all their beaches immediately, and within two days had a plan for new warning signs for the area. Disney CEO Bob Iger issued a statement from China, stating that "as a parent and a grandparent, my heart goes out to the Graves family during this time of devastating loss."

No one is going to make it better for the Graves family, but Disney has always created their parks with safety and a fun family experience in mind. Behind the scenes, they have security and protocols in place to assure that being the case for almost every

imaginable situation. There are monitors, cameras and tunnels.

As terrorism expert David Firester recently noted, "This is a company which deals with millions of people annually, and knows how to handle the unpredictable behaviors of millions. They monitor individuals from the moment they enter the parks."

Disney may be big — and it may tout itself as being the "happiest place on earth" — but it doesn't take its reputation lightly and because of this, Disney should weather this storm and move beyond it better than most.

This provides a lesson for all companies. Some of the best protection for your brand is building a great reputation long before any crisis happens. That way, people know your strengths even when your brand may seem to be at its weakest.

Ronn Torossian is CEO of 5WPR. ○



Ronn Torossian

Edelman boosts crisis offering

Blain Rethmeier, a former PR advisor to President George W. Bush and top exec of the travel and insurance industry's trade groups, has moved to Edelman as Managing Director of its West Coast crisis and risk practice.

The firm also recruited Francesca Trainor Alt, Global Director of reputation risk management at McKinsey & Company, as an executive VP and group head of crisis and risk in New York.

Edelman's crisis and risk Chief, Harlan Loeb, said reputation risk has grown "exponentially" in the past six years, putting pressure on CEOs and boards. The firm said its crisis operation, which now staffs 180, has grown 70 percent over the past seven years while revenues ballooned 500 percent.

Rethmeier, who has been running Strategic Action Public Affairs as Managing Partner for the past three years, was Senior VP of PA and Government Relations for the US Travel Association and Senior VP of PA for the American Insurance Assn. He was a Special Assistant to the President handling communications for the President's National Economic Council and Homeland Security Council. He was also Press Secretary for the Senate Judiciary Committee through the confirmations of Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justice Samuel Alito.

Alt was previously with Hill+Knowlton Strategies in New York and Australia. ○

Barton becomes R-F U.S. healthcare lead

Sally Barton, former Ogilvy Public Relations Executive VP, has moved to independent PR giant Ruder Finn, where she has been named EVP and head of that agency's U.S. healthcare practice.

Prior to joining Ogilvy, Barton was EVP and head of North American healthcare for WPP's Cohn & Wolfe unit, and previously served as Healthcare Practice Director and Senior VP for sister agency Hill & Knowl-



Blain Rethmeier

ton. She also held SVP roles at Omnicom's Ketchum subsidiary and number-one independent firm Edelman.

Barton is now charged with leading strategic and operational oversight of Ruder Finn's U.S. healthcare practice, as well as strengthening the agency's core competencies in emerging healthcare areas.

Ruder Finn's U.S. healthcare practice was previously led by a team of senior leaders. ○

SeaWorld ups Kermes to lead corporate affairs

Jill Kermes, an agency vet who moved to SeaWorld Entertainment in 2013, has been named Chief Corporate Affairs officer of the embattled theme park operator.

"Jill has been instrumental in building out the company's corporate affairs department and overseeing the evolution of our company's reputational efforts," said President and CEO Joel Manby.

On the agency side she was a Senior VP at Ketchum and Managing Director of Public Strategies. She was also VP of Corporate and Brand Communications for Volkswagen Group of America and Communications Director for Gov. Jeb Bush in the early 2000s.

SeaWorld VP of Communications Fred Jacobs stepped down last December as the company tackled continued fallout from the documentary "Blackfish" and calls for reform of its treatment of captive animals.

Manby said he will lean on Kermes' counsel as the company works to "execute on our future plans and increase our advocacy efforts for animals in the wild — in our parks, with our guests and through engagement with policymakers, conservation groups and other constituencies." ○

Audi rolls with Carey

Ellen Carey, VP of Communications for the trade group Securing America's Future Energy, has moved to Audi of America to manage corporate communications and pitch the company's advanced technology like electric and self-driving cars.



Jill Kermes



Ellen Carey

Carey takes the role of Senior Manager, Innovation and Corporate comms., and will promote Audi's work in automated driving, electric vehicles and connected cars, among other technology.

Prior to SAFE, she handled media relations for the American Wind Energy Association.

In addition to corporate comms., Carey also handles internal and dealer communications. She reports to VP and Chief Communications Officer Jeri Ward. ○

Dropbox stores PR with Wu

Agency vet Lin-Hua Wu has left digital payments provider Square for the VP of Communications slot at cloud storage company Dropbox in San Francisco.

Wu is a former Partner for Brunswick Group and San Francisco office Chief at Kekst and Company.

She entered the PR realm after starting out as an attorney.

Dropbox picked up a \$10 billion valuation in 2014, although investors have tempered that figure since. Ana Andreescu heads corporate communications. ○



Lin-Hua Wu

APCO drafts Scandling from Ogilvy

Dan Scandling, Senior VP of Public Affairs at Ogilvy PR, has moved to APCO Worldwide in a Senior PA role.

Scandling, reporting to Washington Managing Director Lisa Osborne Ross, takes the title of Senior Director for PA at APCO.

Scandling was a longtime Aide to Virginia Republican Reps. Frank Wolf and Herb Bateman, including Chief of Staff and Press Secretary to each during tenures of 14 years and 10 years, respectively.

He started out in journalism, running the weekly *Caroline Progress* in Virginia and serving as Copy Editor for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* before moving to the PR realm with the Virginia Housing Development Authority in the late 1980s. ○



Dan Scandling

UFC hires Farragut to fight Muhammad Ali Act

Mixed martial arts promoter the Ultimate Fighting Championship has retained Washington, D.C. firm Farragut Partners for lobbying help on Capitol Hill in response to a House resolution aimed at regulating full-contact combat sports.

Las Vegas-based UFC, which is the world's leading promoter of mixed martial arts and generated a record-breaking \$600 million in 2015, has launched a lobbying effort to communicate with Congress its position on the Muhammad Ali Act, which is currently facing amendments.

The Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act was created to enforce fair business practices and establish regulatory oversight to protect the welfare of boxing professionals. That federal law, which amended the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996, received widespread support from the boxing world when it was passed in 2000.

Currently, the Muhammad Ali Act does not apply to mixed martial arts. On May 26, however, Rep. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) introduced H.R. 5365, The Muhammad Ali Expansion Act, which would broaden the provisions in the Muhammad Ali Act to include fighters of combat sports such as mixed martial arts. The bill is co-sponsored by Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy (D-MA).

Mullin, who has served as representative for Oklahoma's 2nd congressional district since 2013, is himself a retired professional MMA fighter.

Farragut Partners was formed in January by former partners of lobbying firm Ryan, MacKinnon, Vasapoli and Berzok. ○

Airline advocates for privatized airport screening

U.S. airline JetBlue Airways Corporation has hired Washington, D.C. government relations firm Van Scoyoc Associates for lobbying help regarding the Transportation Security Administration's Screening Partnership Program.

Established in 2004, the Screening Partnership Program allows commercial airports to use private screening companies that are contracted by the TSA and operate under federal oversight, as opposed to federal TSA screening agents. The program is intended to improve security protocols, customer service and efficiency, as well as cut down on passenger waiting time, which has grown palpable at many airports in recent years.

To date, fewer than two dozen commercial airports in the U.S. have opted to privatize their security personnel. Potential legal liability issues have been cited as one reason more airports have not yet adopted the program. The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 made it easier for commercial airports to apply for the Screening Partnership Program. ○

Ullyot gets GOP Convention PR

John Ullyot, a corporate, agency and political PR advisor, has been named communications Director for the Republican National Convention in Cleveland in July.

Ullyot was a senior VP for Hill+Knowlton Strategies in Washington before moving to High Lantern Group as a managing director. He spent the last year running his own public affairs and PR shop, Brighton Strategy Group, with clients like DuPont.

He directed communications for the Senate Armed Services



Committee under Sen. John Warner (R-VA) and the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs under Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA).

On the corporate side, he was VP of corporate communications for AOL Europe and led Intel's Washington office.

Ullyot also served as a Marine Corp. intelligence officer in French Guiana.

The GOP confab hits Cleveland July 18-21 and is expected to draw a globalwide audience with the expected nomination of Donald Trump for president. Ullyot reportedly took the director slot over a deputy title for the convention on the resignation June 20 of Michael Caputo, a Trump advisor who stepped down after cheering on social media the ouster of campaign chief Corey Lewandowski. ○

Booz Allen adds Veith in PR role

Craig Veith, former CEO of Direct Impact and Republican Party PR operative, has moved to Booz Allen Hamilton as VP for External Affairs, a new post at the consulting giant.

Veith, who had been running his own shop, Sound Resources, for the past 10 years, oversees government and media relations, as well as corporate social responsibility, based in McLean, Va.

He led Burson-Marsteller's grassroots Direct Impact unit from 2002-05, moving over from Burson, where he chaired its US media practice.

On the political side, he was Communications Director for the National Republican Congressional Committee for the 1995-96 cycle and was a Communications Director for Rep. Mickey Edwards (R-OK). ○



Craig Veith

Justice Dept's Pierce to Vрге

Emily Pierce, Deputy Director of Public Affairs at the US Department of Justice, has joined Washington-based Next Fifteen policy communications firm Vрге Strategies as a Senior VP.

Pierce focuses on legal, policy, anti-trust and homeland security issues for clients of the year-old firm that is part of Next Fifteen alongside PR firms like M Booth and Text 100.

At the Justice Dept., she served as acting director of PA and handled issues like the recent iPhone encryption dust-up and the Obama administration's push for criminal justice reform under Attorneys General Loretta Lynch and Eric Holder.

She joined the administration from the No. 2 editor slot at Roll Call, where she earlier covered the Senate and White House. ○

Rome drafts Ketchum for 2024 Olympic bid

Rome has drafted Ketchum to guide its 2024 Olympic bid following a competitive search.

Ketchum's Milan outpost will lead the charge before the Olympic Bid Committee in Lima in 2017 as Rome looks to land its first Game since 1960.

Rome 2024 said it tapped Ketchum's "global network . . . of more than one-hundred offices in seventy countries worldwide," citing its track record in sports and large-scale events communication.

Isabelle Harvie-Watt, who led Havas Media Group Italy and held PR posts for Gianni Versace and Giorgio Armani, is a strategic advisor to the Rome bid, as well.

Rome 2024 previously worked with UK-based Milltown Partners.

Rome squares off against Los Angeles, Paris and Budapest for the 2024 Games. ○

Raben's \$2.3M Mexico pact

Mexico's consulate general has retained Washington, D.C.-based lobbying and consulting firm The Raben Group to propose a communications plan for the purpose of sharing the experiences of Mexicans living in that country as well as in the U.S.

The agreement, which runs until December 31, will fetch The Raben Group a total of \$2.3 million to "design and scale campaigns in service of educating, enriching and fostering understanding and respect for the Mexican-American people, their heritage and their unique cross-cultural contributions."

Consulting work will be handled by Washington, D.C.-based Information Management Services, Inc. The Raben Group has hired IMS through president Jeff Klueter to serve as a consultant in the project. That company will provide research, communications and strategic support on behalf of the Consulate General of Mexico within the U.S. The Raben Group will pay IMS a total project fee of \$500,000 for the work, which also completes at the end of the year.

The pact was signed by Raben Group president Robert Raben, who will serve as primary representative, along with Larry Gonzalez and Estuardo Rodriguez. They report to Oscar Rodriguez Cabrera, who is the consul general at the Consulate General of Mexico in Houston. ○

PROI adds Australia agency

PROI, the world's largest partnership of independent global PR agencies, has widened its footprint in the Australia market with the addition of its latest partner, Melbourne-based PR and digital communications agency Icon PR.

Icon, founded in 2010, is led by managing directors Chris Dodds and Joanne Painter. Clients include Fleet Partners, Fujimax, G.J. Gardner Homes, JMC Group and Schweppes.

"Icon has recently experienced tremendous growth with major new account wins and double-digit growth in existing client work," said PROI global chairman Richard Tsang. "Icon adds to PROI Worldwide's already strong footprint in the Australian market and will deliver strong, integrated PR solutions and measurable outcomes for our clients."

PROI now maintains a roster of 16 Asia-Pacific agencies, with net fee income in that region exceeding \$120 million. The global partnership in May signed on Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia-based Priority Communications. ○

FARA News



NEW FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT FILINGS

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

Burson-Marsteller, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered May 31, 2016 for Top Sport**, Moscow, Russian Federation, to advise on a range of communications and media issues relating to Russia's participation at the Summer Olympics in Rio.

DLA Piper LLP (US), Washington, D.C., **registered May 31, 2016 for Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Riyadh City, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to assist in strengthening the ability of the U.S. and Saudi Arabia to advance mutual national security interests which may include communications with members of Congress, congressional staff and executive branch officials.

Bryan Cave, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered June 6, 2016 for Gabonese Republic**, Libreville, Gabon, to communicate with members of Congress, their staff, and appropriate administration officials on issues on policies important to the Gabonese Republic.

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.

Park Strategies, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered June 27, 2016 for Newsmax Media, Inc.**, West Palm Beach, FL, regarding open access for news networks for digital broadcasting.

The Glover Park Group, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered June 27, 2016 for Lyft Inc.**, San Francisco, CA, for issues impacting transportation network companies.

King & Spalding, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered June 23, 2106 for OpenGov**, Redwood City, CA, regarding DATA Act implementation, supporting passage of the Financial Transparency Act, and OPEN Government Data Act.

Upstream Consulting, Inc., Washington, D.C., **registered June 23, 2016 for Natural Products Association**, Washington, D.C., regarding dietary supplement issues.

Podesta Group, Washington, D.C., **registered June 24, 2016 for Alliance for Shared Values**, New York, NY, regarding human rights issues.

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Multicultural, beauty/fashion, professional services, travel/hospitality, home furnishings, financial PR/investor relations, healthcare, food & beverage, entertainment/sports clients and social media.
Employees: 14. Founded: 2009.

Agency Statement: With offices in Los Angeles and New York City, Marketing Maven's integration of PR, SEO and social media marketing helps provide a competitive edge to their clients. Marketing Maven helps businesses grow their revenues by developing campaigns that engage a target audience, generate sales then utilize advanced metrics to measure ROI. Their services aid national marketing campaigns and product launches with reputation management, organic SEO tracking, competitive analysis reports, key influencer identification and online product reviews to help increase revenue. Hispanic marketing is also a core competency for Marketing Maven, not only focusing on Spanish language media relations, but assisting clients with culturally relevant content for various marketing channels. Visit www.marketingmavenpr.com for more information.



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