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THE FOOD ISSUE

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January: *Crisis Comms. / Buyer's Guide*  
February: *Environmental & P.A.*  
March: *Food & Beverage*  
April: *Broadcast & Social Media*  
May: *PR Firm Rankings*  
June: *Global & Multicultural*

July: *Travel & Tourism*  
August: *Financial/I.R.*  
September: *Beauty & Fashion*  
October: *Healthcare & Medical*  
November: *High-Tech*  
December: *Entertainment & Sports*

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# Thought for Food



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## Crippled ship sinks Carnival PR

**G**ulf of Mexico. Crisis. Social media takes over story. Tarnished brand.

We're not talking about BP this time. Carnival Cruise Lines is the global company facing a steady stream of negative press since its cruise ship *Triumph* suffered an engine fire February 10 and lost most of its power. Social media took over, with passengers on board tweeting, Facebooking and texting graphic details of the ordeal, essentially fulfilling the roles of 4,200 embedded journalists.

Carnival CEO Gerry Cahill appeared and apologized at a news conference two days later, which, ABC News noted, was the first time a company representative had spoken publicly.

But there was plenty of news for media to run with in the two-day span of silence — the fire broke out Sunday morning and the press conference was held Tuesday night — from Carnival. Passengers on board were more than happy to share their deteriorating experience with the outside world. Word that some were sleeping on deck to avoid the heat and smell inside the ship, and that plastic bags were being used for bathrooms traveled widely.

"Our room is leaking sewage," read one text to ABC News.

"There's no water. You can't really flush so everyone's going in little plastic baggies and putting it outside their rooms," another passenger wrote in a text to NBC News.

"They're vomiting and stuff all over the boat just from the odor. There's feces all over the floor," Brent Nutt told CNN. Nutt's wife Bethany was on board the *Triumph*.

"Everything that Carnival has told me thus far has not matched up with what my mom has said," the daughter of two passengers onboard said.

Carnival is giving the beleaguered passengers a refund, \$500 cash and discount on a future voyage. But the damage to its name — and possibly across the cruise sector — can't yet be calculated.

Ernest DelBuono, a former Coast Guard Commander (and now a Senior VP with Washington

PR firm Levick), told *USA Today* that Carnival is in a difficult spot. "There are going to be people who will be totally miserable, and you can't make them happy. The bulk of the passengers probably aren't happy — their vacation has been ruined. But they understand what happened, provided they're being communicated with and given food and water. Maybe (management) should break out the band."

In 2010, the *Carnival Splendor* suffered a similar circumstance which Carnival interactive content supervisor Andrew Elkins subsequently called "by far the worst thing that's ever happened at Carnival." But less than two years later, the Carnival-owned *Costa Concordia* was among 2012's biggest PR (and operational) disasters. An industry-wide push followed — Burson-Marsteller and Fleishman-Hillard worked with *Costa* and Carnival, while APCO advised the cruise ship sector's trade group — to fix the damage from daily images, beamed globally, of the *Concordia* ship on its side in shallow water.

"We haven't even thought about the economic impact," CEO Cahill said at the Feb. 12 press conference. "Our primary focus is getting the guests home safely."

The cruise industry says it's too early to tell what the impact of the *Triumph* disaster will be on bookings.

The *Triumph's* slow tow to a berth in Mobile, Alabama, was covered live by CNN.

It will take some time for the PR baggage to disembark from this trip. ●

— Greg Hazley



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# Amazon bites Apple in reputation ranking

**Amazon has displaced Apple atop Harris Poll RQ's annual ranking of reputations in corporate America, which continues to take PR lumps in the eyes of the public.**

By Greg Hazley

**H**arris said only six companies achieved a score denoting a "great" reputation, down from 16 just two years ago. They are, in order, Amazon, Apple, The Walt Disney Co., Google, Johnson & Johnson and The Coca-Cola Co.

The bottom five skewed toward financial services as four of the bottom six were Citigroup (No. 55), Bank of America (56), Goldman Sachs (59) and AIG (60). American Airlines (57) and Halliburton (58) rounded out the cellar of the ranking.

Amazon, which drew high marks for emotional appeal and its products and services, for the first time topped the ranking, which is determined by a poll of 14,000 Americans. Other category leaders were Google (workplace environment), Apple (financial performance, vision & leadership), and Whole Foods

(social responsibility).

Apple, which endured a slumping stock price, the death of Steve Jobs and increased competition over the past year, saw its reputation index drop from 85.62 in 2012 to 82.54 in the 2013 ranking.

Dropping out of the top 10 were Kraft (No. 5 last year, now 12) and Microsoft (from 9 to 15). The biggest decliners were Best Buy, which lost 6.76 points off its score, Honda (-4.73), Kraft (-4.16), Microsoft (-3.41), Hewlett-Packard (-3.40) and PepsiCo (-3.31). Showing improvements were Bank of America (+6, despite is bottom five ranking), ExxonMobil (No. 45, +4.37), JPMorgan Chase (53, +3.36) and BP (54, +3.05).

Harris found that while strong negative perceptions of corporate America are down, there has been little increase in positive views as nearly half (46%) see the state as either "fair" or "poor." Only 16% think U.S. companies' reputation

has improved in the past year.

Technology (79% positive/6% negative) is the most positively viewed industry, but has lost some luster since the downturn. Tech is followed by travel and tourism (61/12), retail (58/15), consumer products (56/15), telecommunications (54/21), and automotive (53/20). ●

	Rank 1-15	RQ
1	Amazon.com	82.62
2	Apple	82.54
3	The Walt Disney Company	82.12
4	Google	81.32
5	Johnson & Johnson	80.95
6	The Coca-Cola Company	80.39
7	Whole Foods Market	78.65
8	Sony	78.29
9	Procter & Gamble Co.	77.98
10	Costco	77.95
11	Samsung	77.70
12	Kraft Foods	77.46
13	USAA	77.39
14	Nike	77.24
15	Microsoft	76.46

The reputations of the most visible companies, according to Harris Interactives' RQ, which ranks current perceptions and reputations of corporations. For the first time, Amazon.com surpassed Apple for the number-one slot.

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## Media Briefs

### READERS' DIGEST FILES FOR CHAPTER XI, AGAIN

The Readers' Digest Assn. has filed Chapter XI for the second time three and half years via a pre-negotiated reorganization ironed out with more than 70 percent of its noteholders.

Bob Guth, CEO, said in a statement that the restructuring will "most effectively enable us to maintain our momentum in transforming the business and allow us to capitalize on the growing strength and presence of our outstanding brands and products."

The plan will eliminate 80 percent of RDA's debt load and allow the publisher to focus its resources on our strong North America publishing brands, which have shown a new vitality as a result of our transformation efforts, particularly in the digital arena," according to Guth, who expects the bankruptcy process will be completed in six months.

RDA publishes its flagship *Reader's Digest*, which has nearly 6M subscribers in the U.S.; *Taste of Home*; *The Family Handyman*; *Birds & Blooms* and *Country*. Sitrick and Company's Tom Becker in New York handles RDA Chapter XI media relations.

# 'Blade Runner' gets PR help

Oscar Pistorius, the double-amputee Olympic sprinter accused of murdering his model girlfriend in a story fueling tabloid mania worldwide, is leaning on a London-based sports PR firm amid the crisis.

By Greg Hazley



South African Olympic sprint runner Oscar Leonard Carl Pistorius in February was charged with the murder of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp.

**F**ast Track, which handles PR and sports marketing and is part of Chime Communications, is guiding communications for the South African, who was arrested on Valentine's Day and made his first court appearance today in Pretoria, South Africa. The firm was founded by a former Olympic sprinter and has worked with Pistorius since 2011.

In a statement, Pistorius' family said his thoughts are with the family of his deceased girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp,

who was shot and killed at Pistorius' house on Feb. 14. "The alleged murder is disputed in the strongest terms," said the statement, which added that Pistorius "made history as an Olympic and Paralympic sportsman and has been an inspiration to others the world over."

Pistorius became a global sensation dubbed "Blade Runner" on his run through the games last year. He won a silver medal in the Paralympic Games.

Fast Track said Pistorius is cooperating with police and wouldn't have further

comment until "matters become clearer."

Former *Sun* Editor Stuart Higgins, who sold his London PR shop to Fast Track in 2007, is reportedly advising Pistorius. ●

# Firms take slide in hedge fund/Lear showdown

**Automotive seating and electric systems manufacturer Lear Corp. and hedge fund Marcato Capital are using outside PR counsel as Marcato targets the company's board and management.**

By Greg Hazley

**M**arcato, which has a 5.6% stake in Lear teamed with Oskie Capital Management, says Lear is "dramatically" overcapitalized with a pile of cash the hedge fund says should be used to buy back shares. The fund, which went public with its criticism and suggestions in February, is working with Kekst and Company for communications. Kekst Managing Directors Jeremy Fielding and Thomas Davies advise Marcato.

Lear has engaged Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher for PR support. The Southfield, Mich.-based company responded to Marcato's disclosures by pointing to an acceleration of a \$1 billion share repurchase program and 21% increase in its quarterly dividend. "At Lear, we are focused on value creation for all of our shareholders," the company said in a statement.

Joele Frank partners Matthew Sherman and Andrew Siegel are counseling Lear.

Lear went through a four-month Chapter 11 reorganization in 2009.

The hedge fund, which wants to add new board members but said it is willing to talk with both Lear's chairman and CEO, said the buyback and dividend measures are insufficient and dubbed the board's choices "parsimonious."

Marcato is led by Mick McGuire, dubbed a protégé of hedge fund titan Bill Ackman by the *Wall Street Journal*.

Lear posted third quarter 2012 revenue topping \$3.5 billion on net income of \$121.4 million. ●

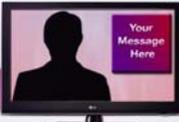


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# Why energy drinks aren't ready for prime time

Energy drinks, riding a wave of slick marketing and voracious consumer appetites for a pick-me-up, have grown into a \$10 billion market seen by many as a bright spot in a wider beverage industry battered by obesity woes and flattened sales.

By Greg Hazley

However, showy titans like Red Bull and Monster Energy have appeared unprepared for a recent PR storm fueled by federal probes, media skepticism and lawsuits.

In Washington, D.C., where federal agencies and lawmakers are poring over the energy drink market and the national zeitgeist increasingly is taking its cues, the companies that market such beverages are now playing defense.

"Their engagement level is lackluster at best," said Rob Volmer, founder of D.C.-based Crosby-Volmer, the firm that helped Living Essentials put its now-ubiquitous 5-Hour Energy brand on the map in 2007. "What's really missing here is any concrete Washington strategy. If there is a strategy, it's not in tune with the realities of what's in place and it's completely reactionary."

## Law suits and regulations

Questions about ingredients and the companies behind energy drinks trickled out in reports for years — *Forbes* ran a lengthy piece in early 2012 on the "Mystery Monk Making Billions with 5-Hour Energy" — but a lawsuit filed last fall put more reporters on the trail and sparked a flurry of scrutiny.

The parents of a 14-year-old Maryland girl who died in 2011 sued Monster in October 2012 alleging the product contributed to her death after she drank two 24-ounce cans in the 24-hours before going into cardiac arrest.

Days after the suit was filed, the Food and Drug Administration said it was investigating reports of five deaths and a non-fatal heart attack that occurred after drinking Monster beverages. The suit accuses the company of failing to warn of the risks of its drinks.

"Monster does not believe that its products are in any way responsible for the death of Ms. Fournier and intends to vigorously defend the lawsuit," the company said. "The FDA has made it clear that it has not established any causal link between Monster Energy drinks and the reports it has received."

Monster relies on PR support from Los Angeles-based Pondel Wilkinson, which has handled investor relations for the publicly traded company that changed its

name from Hansen Natural in January.

Part of the uncertainty and even criticism can be attributed to a veil over the product sector. As an FDA director told the *Times* last fall, energy drinks are not defined by any regulation; the phrase is a "marketing term." Monster for years classified its beverages as dietary supplements, a designation that ducked scrutiny by the FDA. While the company long held that the supplement designation had nothing to do with regulation — supplements have more freedom with ingredients but have to report adverse incidents to the FDA — it reversed course in mid-February and said it would embrace classification as a food, a status in line with Red Bull. The company also said it would add nutritional value information and ingredients to its cans.

Established upstarts like Red Bull and Monster are not the only players in the game. PepsiCo's Amp is the No. 4-selling energy drink, just ahead of Coca-Cola's NOS beverage.

The American Beverage Association, the trade group of beverage giants like PepsiCo and Coca-Cola (as well as new member Monster), says that energy drinks, like all food and beverages, are regulated by the FDA. A frequent stat offered by the ABA is that energy drinks contain half the caffeine of a similar size cup of coffee.

## D.C. support engaged

With coverage and questions increasing, Red Bull North America and Monster for the first time hired lobbying help in Washington at the end of 2012 to help spread their message and influence policy discussions sparked by coverage of their products.

Red Bull in November hired Heather Podesta + Partners to educate D.C. policymakers about their products, as well as Olsson Frank Weeda Terman Matz for counsel on regulation, according to federal filings.

Monster turned to Podesta Group, the firm of Tony Podesta, Heather's husband, in November after the FDA opened its probe. Monster also engaged Covington & Burling for Hill help. Volmer commended

the companies on their choice of D.C. lobbying counsel, but questioned why it took so long. He said a lack of knowledge that the regulatory front was simmering, as well as a continued lack of third party advocacy for the industry has handicapped the drink makers' attempts to manage the crisis.

Volmer noted that scores of regulatory filings have been made since 2008, a harbinger of the regulatory tide pushing on the sector now.

By mid-January, three Democratic lawmakers — Sens. Dick Durbin (Ill.) and Dick Blumenthal (Conn.), and Rep. Ed Markey (Mass.) sent letters requesting information about ingredients to 14 companies involved in marketing energy drinks, including Living Essentials, Monster Beverage, Red Bull, as well as beverage giants like PepsiCo, Coca-Cola and Dr Pepper Snapple.

"Energy drink companies need to be clear with consumers about what they think their product is, what it contains, and what it can do," said Markey. "The broad claims made by these products and their blurred classification in the marketplace make it difficult for consumers, particularly young consumers, to make informed decisions about their consumption." [Markey's former press secretary Izzy Klein is on the Monster lobbying team at Podesta.]

The lawmakers want to know the amounts of stimulants like caffeine and guarana in the drinks and whether the companies consider their beverages food products or dietary supplements. They also are looking for studies that back up health claims made in the marketing of the products.

Monster and other energy makers are quick to note that billions of the beverages have been sold and safely consumed for the past 25 years. Monster alone has sold eight billion cans of Monster Energy since 2002 and is the No. 2 energy drink producer behind Red Bull, according to Bevnet.com.

As one of the lawmakers investigating the industry, Blumenthal, a former attorney general of Connecticut, put it: "Energy drink makers are mistaken if they believe they have escaped regulatory oversight to safeguard consumer health." ●



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# Top chefs, timely trends make today's food news

**Publicists, PR pros and everyday foodies gathered for a February Publicity Club of New York panel featuring editorial staff from some of the world's top food media outlets.**

By Jon Gingerich

The sold-out panel, held at the 3 West Club in New York, served as a roundtable for seasoned industry pros who discussed everything from what makes our current food-obsessed media landscape so vibrant, to what PR pros can do to insert their culinary clients into the conversation of our nation's gourmands.

According to Sarah Kunin, Food Segment Producer for ABC's "Good Morning America," her show is on the hunt for "dynamic, funny and intriguing ways to make food." The program's fallback formula, Kunin said, is to host a known chef who can teach everyday Americans how to make compelling, chef-quality dishes at home "and have fun while they're doing it."

Michael Endelman, Features Editor of *Food & Wine*, said his publication uses a similar model.

"The main thing we're looking for is this: who are the most interesting chefs in the country, and how can everyday people learn from them and make something at home?" Endelman said.

"I can't be best friends with every chef in the country, but each of you can be," said Emily Fleischaker, Food Editor of BuzzFeed. "If you can help me share their story, it's a great way for both of us to get your client's message out there."

An eye for current food trends is key. A chef or restaurant that allies with a popular food fad has a much higher chance of getting coverage than those who don't. According to the panel, sustainable and local are both winning topics.

Trends also need a narrative. Hugh Merwin, Associate Editor of Grub Street: New York, said that while trends in the restaurant world — openings, closings, chef changes — determine a large portion of what's covered on his site, more than anything Merwin admitted that "what I'm really interested in is compelling stories. Anything from food safety, immigrant stories, local food, the economy, applies."

The way this information is delivered also has to be different. Give your client's story a twist.

"Keep in mind that whatever you send me, it has to be something really unique," Kunin said. "It might be an interesting story, but it also has to look good on television."



**The PCNY February Food Media Landscape luncheon (from L to R): Hugh Merwin, Associate Editor, Grub Street: New York; Georgia Kral, Features and Special Sections Editor, *am New York*; Dan Pashman, Creator and Host, *The Sporkful*; Emily Fleischaker, Food Editor, BuzzFeed; Michael Endelman, Features Editor, *Food & Wine*; Sarah Kunin, Food Segment Producer, ABC "Good Morning America."**

Photo by Peter Himler.

"We don't just do a story because someone writes a cookbook," said Dan Pashman, Creator and Host of *The Sporkful*. "We're quirky. We look for things that aren't going to be covered by everyone else."

"I'm interested in features about trends, but I'm really interested in quirky, out-there stuff that's still accessible," said Georgia Kral, Features and Special Sections Editor of *amNew York*. "I like covering restaurant openings, but tell me a story: what is that little thing that makes them different from everyone else? What is it that makes people want to go to this restaurant?"

Like much of the current news cycle, social media serves as a barometer for food headlines. Look at the issues making the rounds in social circles today. Make sure there's an urgency in what you're pitching to the press.

According to Fleischaker, social media is such a pervasive part of her publication's culture that BuzzFeed's front page is now their Twitter page.

"We have editorial meetings every morning. We look at what everyone's talking about on social media and what's trending on Twitter, and that determines, to a large degree, what we'll talk about that day," Fleischaker said. "If we write about these trending issues we know that tons of people will follow it. So, in a way, our lead time is instantly."

Speaking of, lead-time is an odd variable in the food beat, and an unpredictable one at that.

"Usually a few months is a safe bet," said Kunin. "Having said that, I haven't started working on my segment for tomorrow."

"For us, lead time is pretty far out," Endelman. "May is done, June is covered, and July is 90% done. Right now we're working on August and beyond. For big stories, we'll start as far as a year in advance."

Of course, different publications focus on different areas of physical coverage. *Food & Wine* is a national magazine, so they're interested in food trends playing out across the country. *amNew York* is, obviously, a New York City based publication, so coverage has to be local.

A big benefit about the food beat, the panel said, is that the topic is incredibly broad. Stories involving everything from politics, economic factors, the environment, diet trends, travel, health and science all have potential impacts on the food we eat and the culinary trends of tomorrow.

"We're into a very broad range of things," Endelman said. "So if you don't have something that fits into what I do, I can still probably pass you on to someone who does."

"We do everything from game show segments to fashion segments on our show," said Kunin. "If we like the story, there's always a way we can have it play off an existing segment on our show."

Pashman offered an aphorism that aptly summarized PR's relationship with the press. "I can't promise I'll cover it, but I can't promise I won't say bad things about it either." ●

# “Luck is not a business model.”

- Anthony Bourdain

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# Food headlines focusing on sensationalism, not news

Americans are paying more attention to headlines involving food, according to a recent study by a top consumer PR firm. However, there's a growing divide between the food stories we're likely to remember and those we actually deem important — highlighting a potential preference in today's media cycle for junk news over informational substance.

By Jon Gingerich

Compiled annually by New York-based Hunter PR, the food study, now in its 10th year, polls Americans to rank the most memorable food-related headlines that occurred during the year.

What were 2012's biggest food stories? According to the Hunter poll, Chick-fil-A's forays into the gay marriage debate, the controversial use of "pink slime" in beef products, and the practice of bringing healthier lunches to our nation's schools topped the list, respectfully.

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's ban on the restaurant sale of sodas in containers larger than 16 ounces took fourth place, followed closely by the news that McDonald's would begin posting caloric information at all U.S. locations. Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" campaign to fight childhood obesity took sixth place, followed by the drought that plagued much of the Midwest during 2012. At eighth place was the ongoing battle surrounding Genetically Modified Organisms, which famously appeared in California state ballots last November. At the bottom of the list were ongoing studies in Omega-3 Oils and the prevalence of food photography in social media.

## Big headlines don't mean big changes

A prescient takeaway can be seen in the fact that stories involving nutrition accounted for seven out of the top 10 stories that ranked this year. Indeed, more than a third of those polled by the Hunter study — 32% — said they considered food and nutrition stories to be more important than other types of news. An overwhelming majority of those polled — 86% — said they view stories on food and nutrition to be at least "somewhat important." About 80% of those surveyed said they feel people need to take responsibility for what we eat.

This year, Hunter's annual survey went beyond simply gauging popular food-related stories. Hunter teamed up with Digital Research Incorporated to analyze the relative importance of these stories, the perceived impact they've had on consumers and how it affects their shopping and eating habits.

This expanded portion of the survey offers its most telling findings. For one, according to Grace Leong, Managing Partner of Hunter PR, the study now reveals many food-related headlines actually *do* change consumer behaviors. However, many of these changes have occurred in ways that were unexpected.

Specifically, the biggest news items in this year's Hunter poll weren't necessarily stories deemed most important. In fact, many of the top food stories of the year had little or no effect in changing consumer behaviors, and in many cases were more likely to be deemed unimportant by consumers.

Take the Chick-fil-A story, for example. Americans decided this was the most popular food-related story of the year, but it ranked sixth in terms of importance, and only 17% of those polled said it impacted their decision to eat at the restaurant (making it the second least impacting story, above only Bloomberg's soda ban). Indeed, recent earnings reports released by Chick-fil-A shows the story did not result in a decreased sales for the fast-food company.

New York City's famed "soda ban" is another example. It got more press time than almost any other food related story last year — coming in at fourth place — but landed at the very bottom of the list in terms of perceived importance.

"The big takeaway here is that we have to reconcile the fact that just because something is getting lots of press, it's not necessarily doing anything to change our behaviors," said Leong. "In this age of fast media and fluffy headlines people might get aflutter about things and the media really loves it, but at the end of the day it doesn't drive any change at the register."

Unlike the Chick-fil-A and soda ban stories, many nutrition-related headlines that appeared closer to the bottom of the list were actually deemed far more important, and according to the survey, and had a far greater chance of impacting or influencing consumer behavior. Headlines involving GMOs ranked all the way down at number-eight on the list for example, yet were ranked as the third most important story of the year.

Moreover, a large portion of those who followed GMO headlines in 2012 — 35% — said they now check food labels as a result of seeing these headlines. Even more shocking: one of the least popular of the top ten food headlines of 2012 — Omega-3 Oils, which ranked ninth on the list — actually resulted in the highest level of impact, affecting about half — 46% — of consumers who knew about the story.

The takeaway? While Chick-fil-A's stance on gay marriage or Bloomberg's soda saga have proven to make good copy, far lesser known stories have had a much greater impact on consumer behavior once consumers actually knew about them.

"For a long time we've talked about whose responsibility it is to manage nutrition. Is it the food company, or is the onus on the consumer to make choices and build a diet that's healthy?" said Leong. "For me, these stats are saying that many people believe the onus is on them to make good, responsible choices."

The Hunter survey also found that those who knew about the Midwest drought story were more likely to engage in higher rates of comparison and value shopping. While the story was ranked as the seventh most popular of the year, consumers considered it to be the single most important food-related headline of 2012.

"All this just goes to show you, that as food PR people we have to stay ahead of the headlines, because more than anything, we really need to know what these headlines are doing at shelf," said Leong.

## Food gets greater social presence

More people are using social media, both to educate themselves at the grocery aisle as well as to share information about the food they're eating in restaurants. According to the Hunter survey, 59% of respondents aware of the rise of food photography on social media admitted to taking pictures of food they've ordered at restaurants.

"The fact that everyone has a smart phone now really puts more emphasis on what comes out of the kitchen," Leong said. "The food has to be prepared right, it has to look right, because now, basically, a food critic is sitting at every one of your tables." ●

# Maker's Mark dilutes brand in watered-down PR move

**Kentucky-based family bourbon company Maker's Mark in February announced it would be literally watering down its trademark whisky in an attempt to combat product shortages without increasing price.**

By Aimee Jen

It's been a whirlwind journey, starting with the company's initial announcement, to the resulting overload of negative feedback from loyal customers, and finally to its decision to nix the whole plan. Ever since Maker's Mark announced the notion of watering down its trademark red-wax whisky, fans have not shied away from expressing their anger, and media outlets have not stopped criticizing.

Initially, Maker's Mark Chief Operating Officer Rob Samuels made the announcement via email to all brand ambassadors. Due to product shortages from high demand, the new plan was to water down the famous whisky without having to increase the price. This would change the alcohol content from 90 proof to 84 proof. As more light was shed on this matter, loyal customers started accusing Rob Samuels of running the brand into the ground ever since he took over his father's — COO Bill Samuels Jr. — legacy. Bill currently serves as Chairman Emeritus of Maker's Mark.

However, it came as a shock when Bill Samuels Jr. released a statement supporting his son's decision. The letter stated that Bill Jr. and his son spent countless nights taste testing batches, and assured us that the new batch will taste exactly the same. In addition, Bill took responsibility for the company's failure to foresee the shortages.

Good PR is often hard to come by. In this instance, Maker's Mark exemplified quick and good PR strategies in order to combat the world's reaction. Immediately after the initial announcement, the brand made sure to incorporate exclusive interviews to explain their reason behind everything. They admitted their failures, and stood by their decision. Instead of jumping in defense against fans and media backlash, Maker's Mark accepted the feedback and thanked the world for expressing its honesty.

Social media efforts are also important in good PR. When the news first broke, people were voicing their opinions all over Maker's Mark's Facebook and Twitter pages. Instead of bantering back and forth via social media, the brand made a smart move by not posting any-

thing on Facebook, and only sending out two tweets linking to more information; an exclusive interview with Rob Samuels and Bill Samuels Jr.'s statement letter. From a public relations standpoint, it showed great self-control.

As a few more days passed, Maker's Mark's social media was still hot with incoming comments from anyone with an opinion about the soon-to-be watered down product. Then, either in light of Washington's birthday or the bourbon gods were on the consumers' side, Maker's Mark released another statement announcing its decision to continue making the original 90 proof whisky: "Effective immediately, we are reversing our decision to lower the ABV of Maker's Mark, and resuming produc-



tion at 45% alcohol by volume (90 proof). Just like we've made it since the very beginning."

Again, Maker's Mark displayed great PR strategies by initially only posting one tweet: "You spoke. We listened." with a link attached to the official announcement. Then, as the positive comments started to roll back in, the company even retweeted posts from grateful customers. The decision to resume production of its 90 proof whisky further emphasizes that Maker's Mark's loyal fans come first no matter what.

Maker's Mark presented a strong and united front from beginning to the end. The company knew right from the start that media attention would be brutal. Instead of giving excuses, the brand went into the battle with confidence and strength, and finished with compassion.

Aimee Jen works at Lois Paul & Partners in Boston, MA. ●

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# Diet trends reveal new demand for PR leadership

**Natural is “in” and low-fat and low-carb are “out.” There’s no shortage of fads to help Americans eat healthier and lose weight, but how are these trends impacting consumer brands and food companies in 2013? According to a survey of more than 200 of the nation’s registered dietitians, a few big lifestyle trends are set to make news and influence consumer habits this year.**

By Louise Pollock

**W**e tapped our extensive network of influential dietitians to identify these developing nutrition and wellness trends. The findings revealed that natural and simple foods with few ingredients will be the big trend this year, while the low-fat and low-carb fads are on their way out.

## Demand high for natural and simple

More dietitians (51%) predict that consumers will continue to demand natural and simple foods that are minimally processed with few ingredients, compared to last year’s survey (46%). And with more consumers cooking at home, they will be looking more closely at the ingredient list to evaluate the foods they serve their families. This is in line with our findings from last year, predicting that consumers will continue to demand more local, organic, sustainable, fresh, minimally processed foods. With consumers’ increased concern over processed foods that provide little nutrients, they will become more aware of where their food is coming from and what it contains. They want to make healthier food choices that will benefit the whole family.

Some key factors consumers may be

considering when making food choices include simplifying the ingredient list, sodium reduction and eliminating high fructose corn syrup. These dietary modifications will help fuel the trend toward natural, simple eating in the coming year. And according to the survey, making healthier foods delicious is the second biggest nutrition trend. While reducing sodium and sugar, consumers will look to enhance the taste and flavor of everyday meals with exotic and ethnically diverse spices and food choices.

These dietary changes are taking place because consumers want to take more control over their diets. They are better understanding that highly processed foods might pack a tasty punch, but fall flat when it comes to overall health and nutrition benefits. Also, consumers are looking for healthy foods that leave a minimal footprint on the environment, and are easy to prepare — they want to get back to the basics for a more simple, healthy lifestyle.

Half of dietitians agree that low-fat and low-carb diets are out in 2013. After reigning as the biggest diet crazes for several years, it appears that consumers are steering away from these restrictive eating regimens toward a well-balanced diet approach that focuses on better quality foods rather than eliminating an entire food group, like carbohydrates. This is good news for bread, pasta and rice lovers! Of course, the rule of thumb is everything in moderation.

## Weight loss and information trends

When asked about the most popular approach to weight loss in 2013, dietitians were split down the middle, with wheat belly/gluten free (42%) beating out commercial diet programs (41%) by only one percent. While wheat belly/gluten free is predicted to be a popular weight loss trend, diet programs such as Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig will continue to see consumers turning to them for weight loss assistance in the new year. And RDs predict that social media, smart phone apps and dietitians will be the go-to sources for nutrition information in 2013.

## Quality matters

The majority of dietitians (57%) surveyed say that eating high-quality calories — foods with more nutrition per bite — will be most important for achieving a healthy diet and weight in 2013. It’s not just about total calories, it’s about where those calories come from. And, hands down, dietitians agree that eating more fruits and vegetables will have the biggest impact on improving American’s diet and health in 2013 and beyond. These diet staples are packed with disease fighting nutrients, and can help consumers maintain a healthy weight when eaten as part of a balanced diet. Whether fresh or frozen, consumers will look to include more plant based foods in their natural and simple diets.



Louise Pollock

## MyPlate is now our plate

Even more dietitians (76%) are using USDA’s MyPlate to counsel patients compared to last year’s survey (69%). Dietitians are finding ways to incorporate MyPlate into their practice and finding that it’s a great tool for counseling individuals on their diet.

In conclusion, I recommend that industry and media take dietitian predictions seriously when planning for 2013 and beyond. At Pollock Communications, we always seek insights of dietitians when planning branded and commodity PR campaigns, as well as retail efforts for our food clients. Dietitians keep you on the right path because they know where the science is going and what the consumers are thinking, and more importantly, consumers are listening to them — according to the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics 2008 Nutrition and You Trends survey, 78% of consumers consider registered dietitians the most credible source of nutrition advice.

*Louise Pollock is President of Pollock Communications. ●*

## PR Services Briefs

### GLOVER PARK REPS AMC NETWORKS

Glover Park Group is representing AMC Networks, the cable programmer of high-quality, original content that is the target of takeover speculation.

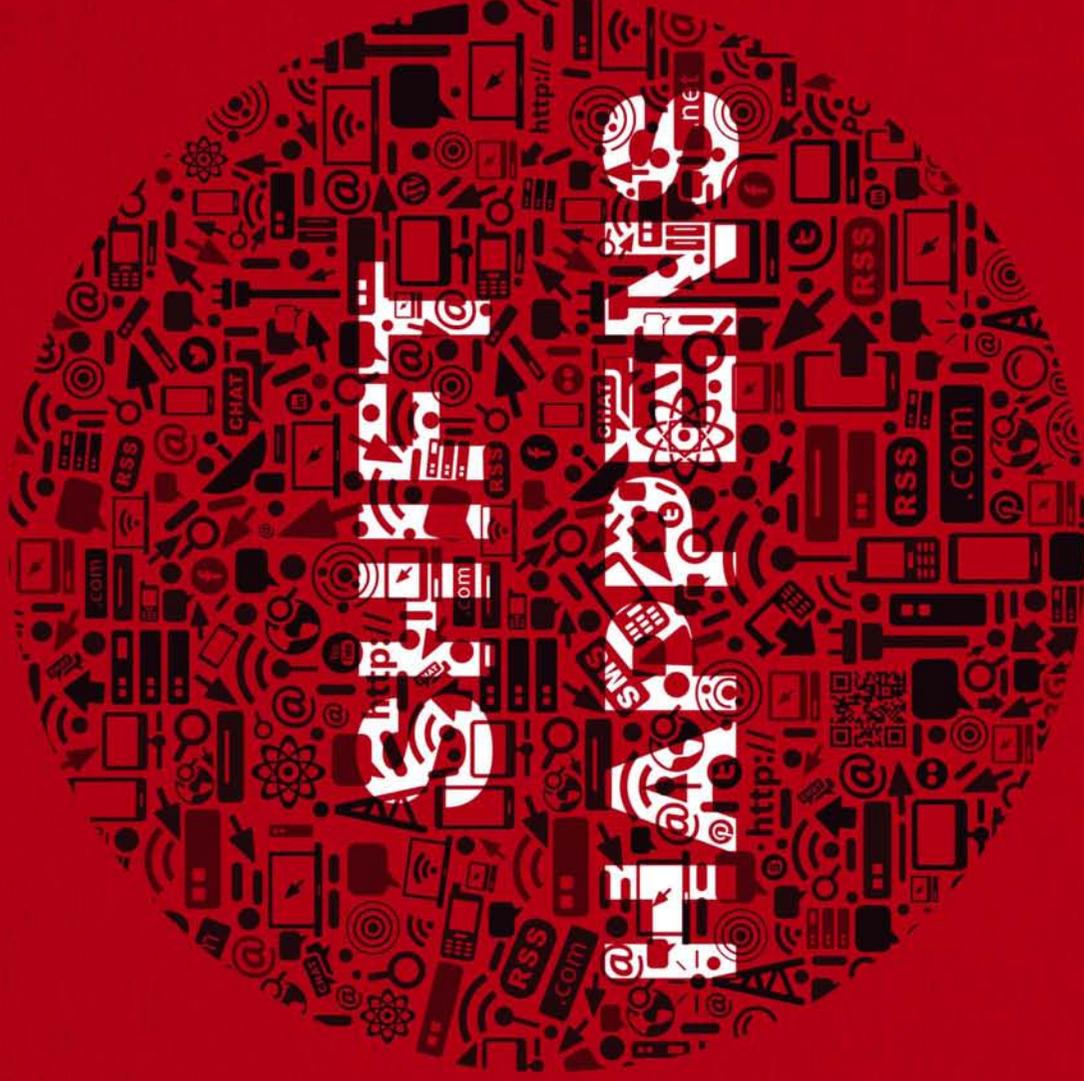
Cablevision Systems completed the spin-off of AMC in 2011, though the founding Dolan family of the cable operator still controls voting rights of AMC.

AMC, which produces shows such as “Mad Men,” “The Walking Dead” and “Breaking Bad,” ranked as the nation’s No. 14th network in February, according to Nielsen. Its channels include AFC, IFC, Sundance Channel and We tv.

Bloomberg reported Feb. 14 that an AMC takeover by Comcast, News Corp., CBS or Walt Disney Co. would provide the programmer more leverage in negotiating fees with distributors.

AMC’s stock currently trades at \$58.75. The 52-range is \$61.32 and \$34.78.

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G R O U P

# “Food porn” bridges gap between Twitter and table

Social Media Week kicked off with a February 18 South Beach foodie panel titled “Beyond Food Porn: The Social Chef.” The roundtable event, presented by Miami Beach-based TARA, Ink. PR, brought some of the biggest names in food together to discuss our rapidly shifting culinary landscape.

By Stephanie Dunn

**B**ravo’s “Top Chef,” Food Network’s “Chopped,” and FOX’s “Hell’s Kitchen,” served as the kickoff not only for Social Media Week, but for the Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival, the star-studded destination event uniting the world’s most renowned wine and spirits producers, chefs and culinary personalities.

As the media landscape continues to shift, the omnipresence of social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram challenges PR pros to maximize their skill set — to inform, promote, converse and ultimately create additional value for their clients. Dishing their insight, both as acclaimed chefs and social media authorities, were panelists Todd Erickson of HaVen Gastro-Lounge; Dewey LoSasso of The Forge Restaurant | Wine Bar; Jeff McInnis of Yardbird Southern Table & Bar; Ralph Pagano of Alba Seaside Italian; and Giorgio Rapicavoli of Eating House, who offered much food for thought for hospitality specialists navigating the world of social.

## A picture is worth a thousand ‘likes’

The consensus was clear among both Social Chef panelists and the audience — Instagram is taking over in 2013. The photo-sharing networking service has proven to be the perfect speed for chefs: faster than Facebook, but slower than Twitter. The chefs on “foodstagramming” and how the practice bolsters their reputation and impacts their bottom line:

Erickson advised to “be sure every photo shared on social media is of value. Don’t oversaturate your Instagram, and don’t share photos of your dishes unless those shots actually entice you to want to eat them. Your photos are your business card.”

“Sharing your culinary creativity in photos is a great way to reach out, inspire, and form a community among chefs and diners,” McInnis added.

## Social media shares equal revenue

An *Ad Age* study found only 1% of

Facebook fans of major brands engaged with their brand pages. Cultivating strong consumer relationships is the result of providing valuable content that educates the diner and enriches their overall experience.



The Feb. 18 “Beyond Food Porn” media panel (L to R): Ralph Pagano, Alba Seaside Italian; Giorgio Rapicavoli, Eating House; Todd Erickson, HaVen Gastro-Lounge; Tara Solomon, TARA Ink.; Stephanie Dunn; Jeff McInnis, Yardbird Southern Table & Bar; Dewey LoSasso, The Forge Restaurant.

Photo by Tara Solomon.

“When our restaurant was still in its pop-up stage, posting our menu to Facebook and Twitter as part of daily routine is what really brought people in and educated them about our food,” said Rapicavoli. “If 2,000 people see your posts, and 10 percent of those people come in, you have a full house.”

“It’s rewarding to share a menu item on Facebook and see guests in your restaurant an hour later as a result,” said LoSasso. “Just be sure you can always execute exactly what you post, even during the 9 o’clock rush on a Saturday night.”

## Dealing with disgruntled diners

The immediacy of social media is a blessing and a curse, the latter being the case when irked patrons take to Facebook, Twitter or Yelp to vent their frustrations. Proactively respond to complaints and offer solutions — the negative feedback can be used as an opportunity to invite the guest back, offer an improved experience, and garner positive social media posts.

According to Rapicavoli: “The point in the restaurant industry is to prevent mistakes from happening, but, when they do happen, let go of the ego and say to the

guest, ‘We messed up, now how do we fix it?’”

## Everyone’s a critic

When traditional media reigned supreme, restaurant reviews were left to professional food writers. With the explosion of social, everyone is a critic ready and willing to voice their opinions on their blogs or newsfeeds. On the chef’s increased accountability:

According to Pagano: “With every plate and every drink that goes out of the kitchen, it’s our responsibility to make it perfect. Everybody is a food critic,” he said. “If we use social media as a tool to say, ‘Come in and check us out,’ it’s fair game for someone to either say ‘I loved it,’ or ‘by the way, it needed a bit more salt.’”

## The future of foodies on social

The PR industry’s 24-hour rule of response has turned into “The Golden Hour.” Social media’s fast pace requires publicists to multitask, keeping an eye on social media for breaking stories in the hospitality industry or timely pitch angles. Yet

the one variable that remains unchanged is the audience’s demand for transparency and authenticity — while a restaurant’s social media pages are expected to be entrusted to its PR team for branding, strategy and crisis management, users expect the posts on their favorite chefs’ personal pages to be genuine.

“Brand management services like Hootsuite are a great way to publish to multiple platforms at once and kill two, three, even four birds with one stone,” Rapicavoli said.

“I’ve tweeted things I didn’t think were newsworthy, and people have approached me to write stories,” Erickson said. “Social media is a great barometer to find out how people are going to respond to an initiative.”

“First we had the Pony Express, then the newspaper, then TV. Now, we’re living in the moment of yet another new tool, and people are excited,” said Pagano. “Everyone eats and drinks, and they like to be celebrated for their own creations and what they enjoy.”

Stephanie Dunn is Director of New Media for TARA, Ink. PR. ●

# Omnicom leads fourth quarter PR gains

**Omnicom led a small surge of PR spending in the fourth quarter of 2012, mostly in North America and developing markets, while Europe continued to dog the big marketing conglomerates and cloud the forecast for 2013. PR services providers, meanwhile, showed growth, as well, but the outlook for this year could look a lot like 2012.**

By Greg Hazley and Kevin McCauley

**O**mnicom reported fourth quarter 2012 PR revenue jumped 10.5% to \$347.9 million. For the year, OMC's PR units, which include Ketchum, Porter Novelli and Fleishman-Hillard, among others, rose 4.9% to nearly \$1.3 billion.

Organic PR growth was 8.4% for Q4 and 3.3% for the year.

OMC's overall net income jumped 12.9% to \$307.1 million in the fourth quarter as revenue inched up 2.4% to top \$3.9 billion on the strength of its domestic business.

International revenue slipped 0.3% for the period, including an 8.8% decline (-3.7% organically) in Euro currency markets to \$659.6 million. The U.K. was up 4.5% (-0.7% organically) at \$343.1 million for the quarter.

Chief Financial Officer Randall Weisenburger said 2013 "feels a lot like 2012 from an economic backdrop standpoint," but added that there are no Olympic games and some spending and revenue are "likely not to be there [this] year."

Advertising rose 4.6% in Q4 (\$1.9 billion), while CRM fell 2.3% (\$1.4 billion) and speciality operations ticked up 2% (\$293 million). For the full year 2012, advertising was up 4.6% (\$6.8 billion), CRM inched up 0.2% (\$5.1 billion) and specialty services declined 2.1% (\$1 billion).

For the full year, net income hit \$998.3 million, up from \$952.6 million in 2011, while revenue rose 2.5% to \$14.2 billion.

Omnicom, which had 71,099 employees at the close of 2012, shelled out \$197 million in acquisition costs, including earn-outs, in 2012. Total debt rose from \$3.2 billion to nearly \$4.5 billion in 2012. OMC also has \$2.7 billion in cash and short-term investments.

Omnicom's board said it has increased its quarterly cash dividend by 33%, from 30 cents to 40 cents per share of common stock.

OMC shares were trading at \$55.36 near a 52-week high of \$55.84 before the market opened Feb. 12. Its Q4 and 2012

results beat analysts' expectations.

## Interpublic ticks up 4.2%

CEO Michael Roth said the firm entered 2013 in a "much stronger position with respect to client retention and new business activity."

IPG's CMG group of Weber Shandwick, GolinHarris, DeVries, Jack Morton, Octagon and Futurebrand enjoyed a 9.4% rise in 2012 revenues to \$1.2 billion. Income was up 13.1% to \$114.5 million. For Q4, the group saw a 4.2% increase to \$334.5 million.

The CMG group's 2012 increase compares to a 2.8% slip in revenues to \$5.7 billion at the McCann Worldgroup, Lowe & Partners and Draftfcb ad group. It posted a 3.7% decline in revenues to \$701 million.

Andy Polansky, CEO of Weber Shandwick, said IPG's PR flagship benefitted from "deeper relationships with key clients" and an upswing in corporate, consumer and healthcare spending. He told *O'Dwyer's* a key goal is to "challenge the status quo."

The Interpublic board approved a 25% dividend hike to 0.75 per share and announced a \$300 million stock buyback program. Roth said those actions reflect the "operating trajectory of the business."

IPG ended the past year with total debt of \$2.5 billion and cash/marketable securities of \$2.6 billion.

## Publicis grows 2.9% in "difficult" year

Publicis Groupe reported fourth quarter organic revenue growth of 3.9% to about \$2.5 billion as gains in North America and developing markets offset sluggish gains in Europe.

For the year, organic growth registered 2.9% on revenue of about \$8.5 billion. Net income jumped 22.8% to euro 737 million. North American revenue was up 6.9% to top \$4 billion for the year, compared with a 2.5% decline in Europe to \$2.4 billion.

Chairman and CEO Maurice Levy said 2012 was to be a year of recovery but turned out to be "difficult, uncertain and disappointing as regards growth and employment, especially in Europe."

Advertising fell short of its 4.7%

growth forecast, ringing in at 3% as the Euro 2012 soccer tournament and London Olympics missed targets.

Publicis said it has debt of about 1.1 billion euro, compared with 1.3 billion euro in cash and securities.

## Cision sees 2012 growth

On the PR services front, Sweden-based PR software provider Cision, which has been reorganizing and shed 20% of its North American workforce in the fourth quarter, said 2012 revenue ticked up 2% to SEK 987 million (about \$156 million) as subscriptions to its flagship service rose and North America offset declines in Europe.

Organic growth swung positive to 4% over 2011.

North American revenue rose 7% to SEK 773 million (\$122 million) for the year while organic growth hit 5% for the year. European operations declined 15% to 222 million.

While revenue declined in the fourth quarter, CEO Hans Gieskes said results were in line with expectations as the company divested its U.S. print monitoring business, which was acquired by BurrellsLuce for \$2 million.

Gieskes said the fourth quarter decline came mostly from uncertainty of renewal customers affected by the divestment of the print monitoring unit, and in North America the company booked a one-time boost last year in broadcasting monitoring which skewed Q4 of 2012.

## Vocus revenues up, losses widen

Vocus reported a \$3.7 million loss for the fourth quarter of 2012 after heavy investment in its sales force, while revenue jumped 54% to \$47.1 million for the period over 2011.

For the full year, the PR and marketing software provider, which plunked down \$169 million last year to acquire email marketer iContact, said its net loss widened to \$23.6 million, up from \$14.6 million a year earlier, while revenue was up 49% to \$170.8 million.

Vocus, which plans to raise prices during the first quarter, said it added more than 200 sales reps during 2012 for a total of 489.

CEO Rick Rudman called Q4 a "strong quarter," pointing to gains in customer numbers — 1,363 net new subscribers, compared with 1,052 a year earlier — and demand for its marketing suite.

Vocus expects 2013 revenue from \$200.3 million to \$201.8 million. ●

# Wellness as a brand strategy

**Consumer brands are realizing that social responsibility, the practice of positioning oneself as leaders in environmental — and now, healthy initiatives — is no longer an extracurricular activity, but an imperative to success.**

By Kriste Goad

If Budweiser can encourage the world to “Drink Responsibly” with a straight face, there’s absolutely no reason why Coca-Cola can’t tackle the world’s obesity problem with a promise to “Market Responsibly.”

Big brands know better than anyone that social responsibility is not just some feel-good, nice-to-have initiative, but rather a business imperative. Now health is moving to the forefront of that agenda as the intensity of the world’s health issues push to the top of mind and top of the media’s agenda.

Sustainability reports are now published by more than two-thirds of the *Fortune* Global 500 companies and have evolved from simple environmental reports to include measures of economic and social performance. As Kelly Spors reported in *Green Business Trends for 2013*, “Sustainability is no longer a fringe activity in corporate operations; it is part of how they turn profits.”

When it comes to the “new black” of corporate social responsibility, wellness is very clearly the new green. A real focus on sustainability and “green” practices is now being supplemented by a real focus on health and wellness.

Look no further than Starbucks and Whole Foods to see what positioning on issues well outside of your direct business can do for your reputation and your bottom line. Both Starbucks and Whole Foods have spent considerable time, energy and dollars through the years to position their brands as stewards of environmental and employee health. They have gotten untold amounts of positive press from both, and both have been the darlings of the health care industry speaking circuit for years.

Increasingly, consumers are factoring health benefits into their purchasing and employment decisions in much the same way as they’ve factored in a company’s commitment to eco-friendly business practices and products.

Just as global warming and Al Gore’s *Inconvenient Truth* shined a bright light on the need to reduce our individual and collective environmental footprint, Food Inc. and record rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease have led to a growing international awareness that “we are what we eat,”

just as we were all told in kindergarten. And for about the last half century or more, we have all gone about our merry ways, obliviously eating and drinking our way to such an unhealthy state that the toll is finally high enough to demand our collective attention.

U.S. health care costs now consume 17.6% of our country’s GDP and a growing chunk of corporate profits. The Affordable Care Act is supposed to help fix that with its focus on wellness, prevention, care coordination, care quality and care efficiency incentives. Employers aren’t so sure. The National Restaurant Association has said health care reform might hurt restaurants’ slim profit margins, because it requires companies with more than 50 employees to provide affordable health insurance.

This battle will rage on. What will be more interesting to watch is the growing trend of companies well outside the health sector positioning themselves very squarely in the wellness space, and, conversely, companies in the health care sector positioning themselves in the consumer and retail sectors.

Consumers’ dollars and loyalty will increasingly fall to the companies and the brands that they perceive to be health conscious and health forward. Combined with increasing government involvement (think Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the New York City bans on everything from trans fats to super-sized sugary drinks), these factors explain why Coca-Cola and the world’s biggest brands have taken note (and responsibility) and have launched massive brand health initiatives. A healthier bottom line is increasingly tied to a brand association with healthier habits, healthier choices and healthier lifestyles.

When you dig a little deeper into Coca-Cola’s obesity initiative you find this very well-done positioning statement: “The goal of our Company is to become a recognized leader in helping people around the world achieve active, healthy lifestyles. For this reason, we are committed to providing and working collaboratively with key stakeholders on programs focused on diet, nutrition and physical activity. Such efforts are yet another example of our dedication to the health and well-being of consumers.”

Also noted in the company’s dedication

to health is its place as the founding partner of the Exercise is Medicine (EIM) Global Initiative, formed in 2007. The vision of EIM is to be a “sustainable global initiative” to “make physical activity and exercise a standard part of a global disease prevention and treatment medical paradigm. For physical activity to be considered by all health care providers as a vital sign in every patient visit, and that patients are effectively counseled and referred as to their physical activity and health needs, thus leading to overall improvement in the public’s health and long-term reduction in health care cost.”

And no, I haven’t confused Coca-Cola with the American Heart Association.

Talk about smart reputation and brand management. This is the same company that’s become a leading advocate for clean drinking water in third-world countries. Why? Well, because third-world countries are a huge growth market and it’s too expensive to ship all that water — the No. 1 ingredient in its products — to those markets and maintain the needed profit margin.

Of course, not every company is Coca-Cola, and indeed few have the size, scope, and resources. Yet every company has the ability to focus on health and wellness issues, to determine where influence can be exercised and priorities reshuffled to address these critical issues. Strategic communication plays a huge role in this process, both in bringing the world’s concerns into our planning sessions and board rooms, and in bringing the company’s priorities and initiatives to the world through ongoing marketing and public relations strategies.

Wellness as a business strategy is finding all kinds of odd and disruptive bedfellows. Smart communications and marketing executives are recognizing the connection. Here’s a tip: with health care going all consumer on us and hospitals and health systems trying to figure out how to go retail or, at a minimum, shift their brands from sick care to wellness, there are plenty of opportunities for partnerships well beyond healthy food choices in hospital cafeterias. Those partnerships are just waiting to be created and fostered.

*Kriste Goad is Chief Marketing Officer for ReviveHealth. ●*



Kriste Goad

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# New tech realities result in culture of disconnection

**The advent of new technologies has resulted in the unintended consequence of a culture of disconnection, where younger generations miss out on needed personal interactions that shape and refine good communications skills.**

By Ron Sachs

**M**y daughter recently told me that one of her classes this semester at the University of Florida — “Interpersonal Communication” — is now conducted completely online, where students sit alone at home, or wherever, to watch pre-recorded video lectures from an instructor. Student interaction occurs only when they post comments online.

Frankly, this isn’t a major advancement in education or communication. This is distant, not “distance” learning — and the class should be called “Impersonal Communications,” because that’s what it is.

Trends like this run the risk of University of Florida (known as the “Gator Nation”) becoming better known as “Gator Alien-ation.” But unfortunately it’s happening everywhere — and the critical issues raised go beyond just education to nearly every way that we spend our time at work, study, home and leisure.

The rush toward connected detachment is not just a generational divide — because it’s sucking all of us in. Sure, incredible advances in technology have ‘shrunk’ the planet and the mere push of a button transports us to other people, other places. Clearly, the benefits are bountiful and have led to giant leaps of advancement in many fields. Public relations professionals are among the best practitioners of this technology — but it’s time for all of us to acknowledge the downside, just as much as we have embraced the upside.

We are the “best” communicators of modern time because of the speedy, diverse ways we do it: inane cell phone chats with anyone — just because we can; effortlessly texting dozens of messages when we’ve largely forgotten what our own handwriting looks like. We are so snug in our modern communications cocoons, opting for exchanges that often provide empty, soulless solitude rather than enriching human interaction.

Notre Dame football star Manti Te’o’s humiliating revelation that the

“girlfriend” he had been “attached” to for the past three years was one that he actually never met, makes the point in a most bizarre way. That story is almost scary in its recognition that long-distance relationship triggered via technology abandon seeing, hearing, touching in any combination of acceptability. Though Te’o may have been duped into this nearly unbelievable hoax about which all of the facts are still more murky than clear, the anecdote demonstrates that too many people are living their lives virtually. But that’s not living.

Thesis: we’re in the beginning of the end of real human communications. But, where’s the rebel force fighting to retain the last vestiges of human contact that could prevent us all from being voluntarily locked in our own narrow stalls of technology?

Why visit our friends or family, when you can just text them, or Skype them? Why ‘write’ a real letter in our own hand anymore — when we can email, text it, or even command Siri to do it for us?

The written word in our own hand is an endangered species of communications, and so, too, are the one-on-one conversations that are the other main anchor of human connection.

At a Thanksgiving dinner, I watched a friend’s teen text her way through the meal, rarely looking up to relate to the family and friends gathered from far-away places just to be together in her home. The disconnection powered by our tech connections makes all of us producers and publishers — but the quality of our interaction often sinks to an all-time low.

I’m not denying or ridiculing the significant wonders achieved by our new technologies and their power to shrink the planet. For example, families separated by military service are thankfully connected by such special conversations that only technology provides. There are myriad other useful and positive applications that we are still exploring in work, education and leisure.

But let’s also recognize that we are seduced by the addictive allure of devices that we don’t fully understand but still are determined to use, and we are connected from our first waking moments to our last conscious acts.

The frantic daily sprint to constantly stay in touch has helped too many of our children, friends, neighbors, colleagues — and ourselves — to lose real touch with the most important principles of human connect- edness.

When was the last time any of us ‘dis- connected’ from the tech world for an extended period of time?

While answers may vary, the truth is many of us would feel a ‘separation anxiety’ from the voluntary, brief abandonment of technology, but not so much from people.

Multi-function technology has surely propelled our society to bold new heights of achievement. But it also has devolved us into multi-tasking fanatics who willingly choose too much to isolate in the process of ‘communicating.’

The death of the real written and spoken word has not yet occurred — but we are close to laying them both to rest. Ironically, we believe we are communicating at the highest level in history — and, we are, in many respects. But we also, in fact, have reduced the art to a cold, technical exercise to often devoid of deeper thought, feeling and warmth.

The answer to this global warning and threat is for each of us to examine how we communicate — and what we could do differently to become the masters of our technology, rather than its willing slaves.

It all could begin with a simple letter, in your own hand, to your mother — or a face-to-face friend meeting that starts and ends with a hug.

*Ron Sachs is a former newspaper and television journalist, and was Director of Communications to former Florida Governor Lawton Chiles. Since 1996, he has owned Florida-based Ron Sachs Communications, with offices in Tallahassee and Orlando.* ●



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# O'Dwyer's Guide to: Food & Beverage PR firms

■ 3.13



**At The Table Public Relations team (from left to right): Lynn Kilroy, Vice President; Cheryl Miller, CEO; Laura Hallmeyer, Account Associate; Candace Rotolo, Account Manager.**

## ALLISON + PARTNERS

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**Scott Allison, CEO**

Clients with a passion for food and beverage turn to Allison + Partners for integrated marketing and public relations programs that drive trial, preference and sales. We leverage the breadth and depth of the agency's expertise to develop compelling programs for brands in a range of food and beverage categories in both the mass grocery and specialty retail space, better-for-you and organic arenas, and quick-service to fine dining restaurants. Whether it's launching products, reaching the crème-de-la-crème of influencers, or making a restaurant the place to see or be seen, our team of passionate foodies grow share of voice (and mouth) for our clients.

Through our network of twelve offices in the U.S and international, we grow some of the world's

leading food and beverage brands: B&G Foods, Pernod Ricard, Food Should Taste Good, Cascadian Farm and Masi Agricola. Our capabilities include product launches, branding, publicity and media tours, digital activations, sampling and events, retail marketing, sponsorships and cause marketing.

## APCO WORLDWIDE

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Food and beverage companies globally are navigating an increasingly complex external environment. Greater regulatory activity across all aspects of their businesses mean that companies must take a more integrated, stakeholder-centric approach to the way they communicate. APCO helps our clients to create brand value by connecting thoughtful insight about stakeholders to powerful and measurable activation campaigns.

APCO's global Food & Consumer Products practice, led

by Stephanie Lvovich, executive director, works with global market leaders in the food and beverage sector to manage their corporate reputation and raise their profile in target markets, position their businesses on sustainability and health & nutrition issues, engage on trade and standards issues, manage labor issues, launch new products and enter new markets.

Our clients in this field include Mars, Tesco, PepsiCo, Walgreens, KFC, the American Beverage Association, the World Cocoa Foundation, Agree, Samworth Brothers and Share Our Strength®.

## AT THE TABLE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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**Cheryl A. Miller, CEO**  
**Lynn Kilroy, Vice President**

At The Table Public Relations, established in 1983, is a food and beverage-focused firm that raises awareness and communicates messages for client brands, products and services. With integrity, our team of hardworking professionals strive to build relationships, exceed expectations and earn the trust of those who produce food, serve food and love food.

We are results-oriented and provide strength in strategic planning, news media relations, social media programs, community relations, special events and crisis/issues management. We specialize in retail, restaurant, food-service, commodity and branded food categories. We counsel clients on effective ways to create, nurture and sustain their relationships with key constituencies. We produce fresh ideas and create long-term relationships. We offer each client the personal involvement of a customized team of skilled, passionate professionals.

Whether your objectives are to increase sales, strengthen consumer loyalty, build your brand or

improve public image, we produce results. We are accountable.

## BLAZE

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**Matt Kovacs, EVP/GM**

BLAZE is the nationally recognized PR firm that attracts compelling and aggressive consumer brands that need to win. BLAZE develops campaigns that help our clients create or reclaim relevance in the marketplace. Utilizing comprehensive strategic communications campaigns to differentiate and elevate our clients from their competitors, we are able to exceed our clients' expectations when it comes to positioning them to their audiences and attracting positive attention from both consumers and the media. BLAZE also offers full public affairs capabilities through its parent company DAVIES.

Clients include: AmaWaterways, Clarendon Hotel, Club & Spa, Hangar 24 Brewery, KeVita Sparkling Probiotic Beverages, Marina del Rey CVB, Minta Soda, Meritage Restaurant, Paragon Restaurant, Ruby's Rockets — functional pops, SnöBar Cocktails, Sunsweet Bakery and Vertuze sparkling wine.

## BRESLOW PARTNERS

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**Tina Breslow, President**

Breslow Partners has been one of Philadelphia's leading public relations firms for over 25 years. In addition to the team's creativity and dogged work ethic, it's the relationships with both clients and the media that distinguish the



Coyne PR's work for Egglard's Best, the No. 1 branded egg in the U.S., resulted in 558 million impressions across national and local media last year, more than ten times the amount attained by the company's previous PR agency.

agency. The group prides itself on pro-active service that produces big-time results time and time again.

Over the years, Breslow Partners has worked with a high-profile client roster rich in hospitality and the culinary arts. Current clients include Nectar Restaurant, Linvilla Orchards, Night Kitchen Bakery, Phillips Seafood, PetValu, Shank's Original, Vietnam Restaurant, Vietnam Café, Grill Fish Café, Tavro 13, Miles Table, Le Viet, and Fire and Ice.

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**Melanie Young**, Chief Connector

The Connected Table® specializes in brand and image building through marketing and promotional campaigns, media relations, sponsorships, education, business-to-business and lifestyle events in wine, spirits, food, publishing and causes. We connect U.S. and overseas organizations and companies with key influencers throughout the nation, including media, wine and food industry leaders and lifestyle movers and shakers.

In-house services include media strategy and press management, event production,

sponsorship and spokesperson management, social media campaigns and full service writing. Sample clients: Italy: Consorzio Brunello di Montalcino, Spain: Bodegas Fariña, D.O. Toro, D.O., Wines of Catalunya France: Vidal-Fleury, Sauvion et Fils California: The Calling, Joseph Carr, Cigar ZIN Corporate: Deutsch Family Wine & Spirits Causes: SHARE.

## COYNE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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**Tom Coyne**, CEO  
**Richard Lukis**, President  
**Tim Schramm**, Senior VP  
**Stacy Becker**, Vice President

Coyne PR is one of the nation's leading independent public relations agencies with extensive experience in the Food & Nutrition category. Coyne PR combines sound strategic counsel with cutting edge creative elements to achieve superior communications goals for its clients. The Coyne PR Food & Nutrition team has seasoned food, beverage, nutrition and wellness specialists, combined with the industry's top consumer and national media experts. The team has developed, implement-



The Connected Table's Melanie Young and David Ransom (far left) toast Benvenuto Brunello with officials from the Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino, Kevin Zraly (in Brunello jacket) and Robin Kelley O'Connor, Italian Wine Merchants (far right)

Photo credit: Peter Doyle Photography

ed, and supported major brands and initiatives for industry-leading clients, including Del Monte Foods, General Mills, PepsiCo, The Hershey Company, Egglard's Best, Perrigo Nutritionals, and Solae, among others.

Agency experience includes product launches, brand building campaigns, tradeshow/conference support, events, sponsorships, contests, promotions, cause marketing, crisis management, influencer engagement, social media, and partnering with respected associations in the food, nutrition, and health space. In addition, the agency boasts an internal digital and design group, whose capabilities include creative strategy, social media campaigns, community management, digital production, full service design, video production, website design & development, mobile applications & programs and webcasts & e-learning.

## CRT/TANAKA, LLC

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**Mike Mulvihill**, President  
**Patrice Tanaka**, Co-Chair, Chief Creative Officer  
**Jason Stemm**, Vice President

CRT/tanaka features one of the most respected food/beverage/ nutrition practices in the

country, offering award-winning public relations, marketing, branding and digital solutions. We have built an experienced science and nutrition-based team of food professionals, including registered dietitians, recipe developers, food service experts, food writers/publicists, food marketing and digital specialists. In-house facilities include a test kitchen and an extensive food-focused library. Our research-driven food marketers influence consumers, customers and all important audiences, including foodservice, food manufacturing, retail, regulatory, women, kids, seniors, healthcare and ethnic audiences.

Consumer and B2B food clients includes Avocados from Mexico (APEAM), Duda Farms Fresh Foods, Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers, Florida Supersweet Corn, Florida Tomato Committee, Hass Avocado Board, John Morrell Food Group, North Carolina Sweet Potatoes, Skuna Bay Salmon, U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council and Wines from Rioja (Spain). Offices are in New York; Richmond; Los Angeles; Washington, D.C.; and Norfolk, Va.

The April issue of *O'Dwyer's* will feature a company profiles section on firms that specialize in social media. If you would like your firm to be listed, contact Editor Jon Gingerich at 646/843-2080 or jon@odwyerpr.com

**EXPONENT PR**

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**Tom Lindell**, *Managing Director*  
**Bernice Neumann**, *Practice Leader, Food & Nutrition*

Exponent is a dynamic, modern communications practice with an expertise in building belief in food and nutrition brands. Our more than 60 belief architects provide counsel to some of the nation's most recognized brands including General Mills, Pillsbury, Fiber One, Land O'Lakes, Alpine Lace and Kozy Shack, as well as high-profile commodity groups like the International Olive Council.

Exponent delivers a bold, modern approach to public relations — one that infuses creativity and leverages the power of digital and social media to convert nutrition, health and lifestyle information into compelling marketing tools, content and advocacy. We work with the nation's most renowned chefs, top food bloggers, dietitians and marketers to develop new recipes, test and demonstrate new products, and influence food trends.

This ability to out-think and out-perform competitors — no matter their size — has allowed Exponent to help food and nutrition products rise above the fray of ever-changing diets, tastes and lifestyles.

**FINEMAN PR**

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Fineman PR, founded in 1988, specializes in Brand PR and crisis communications for food and beverage clients. Our strength is in building strong and appealing brand identities, especially for consumer-facing companies.

Current client experience includes full service communications for California-based Foster Farms Poultry. Work includes Brand PR and consumer product promotion, issues management, retailer and other special events, plant and facility openings, employee communications, scenario planning, multicultural outreach, community relations, food safety education, social and digital media initia-

tives, and customer relations.

Agency work also includes wine PR, multicultural communications for nutritional supplements, and brand positioning for food service industry leader, Guckenheimer, and L.A.-based Sterling Meat Company.

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**Cliff Berman**, *Senior Partner*

Finn Partners has outstanding food and beverage capabilities, matched by an impressive list of food and beverage — both non-alcohol and spirits — clients. Particular areas of strength and expertise include branding, lifestyle marketing, nutrition, health and wellness, and promotional events.

A sampling of our clients past and present includes Whole Foods, Cinnabon, Crystal Geyser, Kellogg's, Good Earth Coffee, Gatorade, Tonnino tuna, Happy Egg, Snapple and others. In the beverage alcohol area clients include Beringer Wines, Pinnacle Vodka, BevMo!, Greg Norman Wine Estates, Penfolds, and Seagram's.

Our programs and contacts span the food and beverage media and, through social media, we are very active in programs that directly engage consumers.

On behalf of food and beverage clients we have developed an expansive list of influencer contacts among celebrity chefs, bartenders, working chefs, leading food and beverage bloggers, and others.

**FOODMINDS, LLC**

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**Laura Cubillos**, RD; **Bill Layden**, **Sue Pitman**, MA, RD; *Partners*

FoodMinds is a food and nutrition consulting and communications company specializing in food, nutrition, health and wellness. We

harness communications, science and public affairs to establish unique selling propositions and produce novel food and nutrition programs.

We create pathways for new opportunities and growth that transform perceptions and influence decisions and actions. In short, we don't just tell your story better — we help you tell a better story that makes a difference.

Clients include: American Heart Association, Applegate, Can Manufacturers Institute, Dairy Management, Inc., Dairy Research Institute, Grocery Manufacturers Association and Food Marketing Institute, Hass Avocado Board, Kellogg's, Micropharma, Midwest Dairy Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Confectioners Association, Nestle, Nutrient Rich Foods Coalition, Sabra Dipping Company, United States Dairy Export Council and Welch's.

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**Rick French**, *Chairman & CEO*  
**David Gwyn**, *President / Principal*  
**Natalie Best**, *Executive VP / Dir. of Client Services / Principal*

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 84 research, public relations, public affairs, advertising and digital marketing experts among its Raleigh, N.C. headquarters and New York City, Dallas, Los Angeles and Tampa offices.

FWV is home to one of the nation's largest food and beverage practice areas and is ranked as the #22 firm in this PR category by *O'Dwyer's*. A leader in launching head-turning, results-driven marketing campaigns, FWV currently works with some of the world's foremost companies and brands, including Hood River Distillers (Pendleton Whisky, Pendleton 1910, Yazi Ginger Vodka, Broker's Gin and SinFire Cinnamon Whisky), Melitta Coffee, Moe's Southwest Grill and ORO Restaurant & Lounge.

Past food and beverage clients include The Coca-Cola Company

(NESTEA, Gold Peak, Minute Maid, DASANI and Simply Orange), Celebrity Chef Lorena Garcia, the North Carolina Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, Brinker International (Maggiano's Little Italy restaurants), Mia Francesca Trattoria, House-Autry, ConAgra (Slim Jim, Pemmican Beef Jerky), Nabisco Foods, Brown-Forman (Jack Daniel's), Whole Foods Market and Diageo North America (Bulleit Bourbon), among many others.

Product launches have included Melitta Café Collection, SinFire Cinnamon Whisky, Pendleton 1910, NESTEA COOL, Diet NESTEA, Gold Peak, DASANI Plus, Arbor Mist wines, Dolphins & Friends snack crackers, Orville Redenbacher's popcorns and Pemmican Beef Jerky. FWV launched these products in key markets across the U.S. with strategic planning and comprehensive media outreach programs. The agency also executes multi-faceted digital and social media campaigns to stimulate product trials, awareness and purchase.

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**Hanna Lee**, *President*

Hanna Lee Communications, Inc. is an award-winning agency that integrates traditional public relations with innovative social media marketing. Our industry expertise includes spirits, food, wine, hospitality, lifestyle and entertainment. The agency's philosophy is to only represent products that we are passionate about and that we believe in.

Our strategic campaigns have earned top awards and acclaim, including *PR News*' Platinum Awards, Bulldog Media Relations Awards, PRSA-NY's Big Apple Awards, *The Communicator* Awards, *PRWeek* and *SABRE* Awards. In addition, through our multi-year PR campaign for Mionetto Wines, Hanna Lee

Continued on page 28

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Hanna Lee Communications President Hanna Lee accepting an award at the 2012 PRSA NY Big Apple Awards.

**HANNA LEE COMMS.**

— Continued from page 26

Communications contributed to developing the now-popular Prosecco category in the U.S. Our prospects come to us by referral from satisfied clients and media who trust our work. We are New York-based, but our public relations and social media outreach are national and international.

The agency's client experience includes the Manhattan Cocktail Classic, Campari, Louis Royer Cognac, Santa Teresa Rum, Leblon Cachaça, Sobieski Vodka, Marie Brizard Liqueurs, The Dead Rabbit, Atsby New York Vermouth, Michael's New York, Forcella Restaurant Group, MONO+MONO Restaurant, Japan Week, Wines of

Croatia, Terra Andina Chilean Wines, G7 Portuguese Wine Consortium, Mionetto Wines and others.

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**Grace Leong, Jonathan Lyon, Jason Winocour, Mark Newman, Donetta Allen, Gigi Russo, Erin Hanson, Partners**

Hunter Public Relations is an award-winning, top-ranked independent marketing communications firm specializing in consumer brand and lifestyle public relations with particular expertise in food,

beverages, wines and spirits. Clients include some of the countries most iconic and respected food and beverage companies including Kraft Foods (Jell-O, Kraft Macaroni & Cheese), Post, Smithfield, E&J Gallo Winery (Barefoot, Gallo Family Vineyards), Diageo (Johnnie Walker, Ketel One Vodka), and Arby's. Tabasco Brand Pepper Sauce, our first client 24 years ago, is still a client today.

Our 90-person firm offers strategic marketing PR services including: research and insights; traditional and digital media relations; social media marketing; Hispanic strategies and solutions; corporate/social responsibility initiatives; special event production and sponsorships; product introductions and anniversaries; nutrition and recipe initiatives; talent negotiations, entertainment integrations; spokesperson media tours; and crisis counseling. Hunter PR's award-winning graphic and digital design team creates everything from program logos and collateral materials to innovative, custom social and digital media applications in house. Revitalizing mature brands, creating buzz around new products and building awareness among key influencers groups (including the epicurean, dietetic and medical communities) are among the firm's specific areas of expertise.

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**Janine Gordon, Pres. & CEO  
Alvin Schechter, Chairman  
John Donofrio, CFO**

Janine Gordon Associates excels at expanding brand connections via big ideas and flawless execution. With experience ranging from fine dining to fast food and culinary training, JGA understands the challenges inherent in building relationships with consumers and stakeholders in these dynamic categories.

Established in 1993 by Janine Gordon, formerly CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi Public Relations, JGA is a cutting-edge New York City PR boutique with the sophistication and energy required to build successful F&B brands. Chairman

Alvin Schechter, one of the founders and former CEO of Interbrand, brings world-class brand skills to JGA clients.

We know that the most valuable marketing component of a successful restaurant, food, wine or spirit is its brand image. JGA's food and beverage specialists are highly skilled in communicating that image through our solid connections to the most influential food and beverage journalists and personal access to chefs, sommeliers, mixologists, guidebook editors, nutritionists, bloggers, tweeters and tastemakers.

JGA has unique insight into luxury brands. As long-term publicists for American Express-Harrison Group Yearly Survey of Affluence and Wealth in America, we are privy to the most up-to-date findings on what drives the behavior of the rich and the super-rich.

Our work is characterized by ingenuity in thinking and transparency in style. We are experts in the full range of communications tools. Our goal is to deliver shrewd brand strategy, high profile media coverage, A-list events, compelling celebrity endorsements, social media content with viral appeal and mutually beneficial strategic alliances — always within the context of an integrated strategy.

If you want to expand your brand's connections, start by visiting us at [jgordonassociates.com](http://jgordonassociates.com).

**JSH&A**

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jonni@jsha.com  
www.jsha.com

JSH&A is a Brand-Builder, a Problem-Solver, Noise-Maker, Relationship-Broker, Excitement-Engineer and the CEO of Consumer Connections. For more than 20 years, JSH&A has been honored to work with some of the best-known food and beverage brands in the world — brands like Beam, Inc., Hershey's, ConAgra Foods, McDonald's, and other industry icons. Our trademarked LIF™Style strategy creates integrated campaigns that drive impact and build brand equity whether we're launching a delicious new product for ConAgra or celebrating holiday baking with Hershey's. JSH&A's LIF™Style social media team



Hunter PR worked with Top Chef Master Chef Floyd Cardoz to promote Smithfield's Think Pink Pork initiative to educate consumers to cook pork to 145 degrees. The experiential dinner, complete with cooking demonstrations by Chef Cardoz, was attended by more than 38 food-focused media outlets.

has a proven track record engaging consumers online, offline and in-line with a powerful blend of traditional media relations, experiential, social and digital activations, strategic partnerships, influencer outreach and crowd-sourcing. Visit us at [www.jsha.com](http://www.jsha.com) to learn more about us and the great work we do.

**KELLEN COMMUNICATIONS**

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**Joan Cear,** *Vice President*  
**Debra Berliner,** *Vice President*  
**Francie Israeli,** *Vice President*

On the journey from farm to fork, food and beverage products may face unique and unexpected opportunities as well as challenges. Over decades of working in the food and beverage industries, Kellen Communications has assembled a team of specialists whose experience spans the range of publicity and promotion; nutrition communications; food safety, science, research and regulatory matters; issues and crisis management.

From consumer products to corporate entities, artisanal products to iconic brands, coalitions to trade associations, Kellen Communications' award-winning professionals are expert at developing and implementing strategic communications campaigns that produce results. Our staff works closely with journalists and bloggers, food industry associations and related tradeshow, professional health and nutrition communities, the food related academic community and government regulators. In addition to publicists and digital media specialists, among our professional staff are marketing communications and public affairs experts, web developers, nutritionists, registered dietitians, food technologists/scientists, and PhDs in microbiology,

toxicology, and biological/biomedical science. We have developed strong relationships within the traditional and social media sectors and have extensive networks within the food industry that help our food and beverage clients both promote and protect their products.

**KOHNSTAMM COMMUNICATIONS**

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**Josh Kohnstamm,** *President*  
**Greg Zimprich,** *Senior Vice President*

Kohnstamm Communications is an independent PR agency based in Minneapolis/St. Paul that was voted 2010 Boutique Agency of the Year. With extensive national food and beverage client experience, Kohnstamm has developed best-in-class expertise building brands in fast-growth and organic and natural channels. SVP Greg Zimprich brings more than 25 years of proven PR industry experience to the position, including nearly 20 years with General Mills, where he launched more than 100 new products and developed nationally recognized brand marketing capabilities.

Notable food and beverage client experience includes: MOM Brands, Naked Juice, Honest Tea, La Tortilla Factory, Thai Kitchen, 3M Food Safety Division, Q Tonic, Reed's Ginger Brew, Genisoy, Republic of Tea, Dancing Deer Baking Company, Way Better Snacks, Dr. Praeger's Sensible Foods, and SunOpta.

**KONNECT PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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**Sabina Gault,** *CEO*  
**Monica Guzman,** *PR Director*

Konnect Public Relations is a midsize, full-service public relations agency that provides clients with custom PR campaigns that produce ROI. Placing an emphasis on clients'



**JSH&A helped Beam, Inc. open its new visitors center and distillery experience.**

minimum investment and maximum exposure, Konnect PR works to help brands in the food & beverage space penetrate the marketplace and grow their business.

Company assets include a proven track record of successful campaigns, a vast network of national and local media contacts, over 30 years of combined experience and a knowledge of 7 languages. With services including media relations, social media, marketing, event and trade show support, crisis management, new product launch development, content creation, celebrity seeding and much more, Konnect PR creates each campaign to meet clients' specific goals and consistently deliver results.

Current Konnect PR food & beverage clients include Nestlé Waters North America, Fatburger, Rhythm Superfoods, Mastrad, Hurom, Fissler and Capriotti's, to name a few. Working to raise awareness for

these brands, Konnect PR does everything from secure national segments in outlets like the Today Show and Food Network's Unwrapped, to help with new location openings and special promotions, partnership creation, event planning and more.

**LANE**

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500 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2720  
New York, NY 10110

**Wendy Lane Stevens,** *President*  
**Kristen Siefkin,** *VP, Food and Beverage Practice*

LANE is an experienced agency that generates results that build business. We track trends and monitor consumer

Continued on page 30



**Konnect PR's longstanding client Rhythm Superfoods featured on the season premier of Kourtney & Kim Take New York.**



**M&P staffer (left) takes "Beets to the Streets" for client Aunt Nellie's Pickled Beets in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Chicago to find out what people really think about beets. Consensus? They love them!**

## LANE

Continued from page 29

sentiments from coast to coast. Using insights garnered from firsthand experience as well as from media, influencer and consumer circles, LANE makes creative strategies bigger than life.

Our customized, multifaceted campaigns connect across social and digital media, traditional media, stores and restaurants, and events. The cumulative effect is a well-defined brand and improved bottom line.

For more than two decades, LANE's regional, national and international campaigns have elevated brands including: Moonstruck Chocolate Co., Whole Foods Markets,

International Olive Council, Wines from Spain, E&J Gallo Winery, The Wine Group, Hood River Distillers, Dutch Bros. Coffee, One Degree Organics, Snake River Farms, Double R Ranch, and Widmer Brothers Brewing.

## LEE & ASSOCIATES

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pr@leeassociates.com  
www.leeassociates.com

**Howard Pearlstein, Principal**

Lee & Assocs. offers strategic planning, program evaluation, media relations, product launches, consumer education, recipe development, special events,

crisis management and corporate PR services to its food & beverage client roster.

Founded in 1950, the agency is proud of its Western Research Kitchens division, which features home economists, nutritionists, dietitians, chefs and medical doctors. The firm has represented PepsiCo, Del Monte, American Home Foods and Suntory Int'l, as well as brand names like John Morrell, Florida's Natural Fruit Snacks, Morehouse Mustard and Mrs. Cubbison's Foods (stuffing and croutons — a client for 60 years). Additional clients include trade associations and marketing boards, from California apples, eggs, figs, prunes, seafood and tomatoes to Hawaiian papaya, Oregon potatoes and the New Zealand Trade Commission.

Lee & Associates recently expanded its "Marketing Blend" Internet Division with a heavy investment in Social Media marketing, which combines traditional PR/Publicity activities with online marketing, SEM and Social Media solutions, including brand strategies for Facebook and Twitter campaigns, food & lifestyle blogger outreach and online media.

## M&P FOOD COMMUNICATIONS INC.

151 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 804  
Chicago, IL 60601  
312/201-9101  
www.mpfood.com

**Brenda McDowell, Principal**  
**Lisa Rigney, Director of Business Development**

M&P provides public relations and digital communications services to a variety of consumer food and beverage clients across the globe. Whether building buzz with editors, reaching consumers via social media or developing a delectable recipe to share with bloggers, M&P programs are tailored to clients' needs and designed to deliver.

A launch party, whether in a trendy uptown loft or via Twitter, filming man-on-the-street videos, managing brand ambassador programs, or conducting a contest on Pinterest,

are all in a day's work.

The M&P in-house test kitchen extends client offerings beyond traditional public relations programming to include hands-on expertise in recipe development, food and wine pairings, contest judging and more.

Culinary-focused, consumer-connected and client-centered, our success is proven on behalf of current and past clients including Dreamfields Pasta, Seneca Foods, Safest Choice Pasteurized Eggs, Bord Bia — Irish Food Board, Wilton Enterprises, Quaker Oats and National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

## MARX LAYNE & COMPANY

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www.marxlayne.com

**Michael Layne, Managing Partner**

Marx Layne has been providing cost-effective marketing, public relations and social media services on a local, regional and national basis to the food and beverage sector since 1987.

Services offered to clients include media relations, product publicity, crisis and issues management, internal communications, special events planning, social media, online reputation management, direct mail, e-blasts, graphic design, Web development, and brochure and newsletter production.

Clients include fine dining restaurants, quick service restaurants, supermarket chains, and food and beverage manufacturers and suppliers.

## MASON, INC.

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203/393-1101, ext. 169  
fonofrio@mason23.com  
www.mason23.com

**Fran Onofrio, President**

Through creative publicity, social media, promotions and events, our programs build brand awareness, customer trial and repeat traffic. We offer



**Mason consistently garnered national coverage for Bruegger's fundraising partnership with Operation Homefront. Mason created the annual July 4th red, white and blue bagel promotion for the chain.**

brands a proven integrated approach for success that will keep you ahead of the trends in your category.

Our team is focused on delivering creative solutions with the speed and accuracy that retail marketing requires. We think in terms of promotions that create added value and drive sales. It's a combined strategic, creative and implementation mindset that brands such as Bruegger's Bagels, Bigelow Tea, Salsarita's, Robeks and many others have relied on.

Our close proximity to national media outlets and established relationships with key industry leaders will deliver consistent national brand-building attention and provide your local operators with cash-registering opportunities.

Isn't it time for your brand to enjoy dedication and focus from a highly-experienced team? From analyst relations, franchise and community relations programs through crisis management, Mason offers full in-house earned, owned and paid media capabilities.

**M BOOTH**

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New York, NY 10010  
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better4you.mbooth.com

**Margaret Booth, President**  
**Rich Goldblatt, SVP/Director,**  
*Food/Better4You*  
**Lauren Swartz, SVP/Director,**  
*Wine & Spirits*

M Booth's Food & Beverage practice continues to thrive. Offering strategic programs amplified by media and blogger outreach, social media engagement, tasting events and targeted ambassador programs, the agency's business grew 40 percent over the previous year.

On the food side, the agency added Schwan's Consumer Brands, one of the largest frozen food manufacturers nationwide. M Booth is now building awareness and engagement for brands in the pizza, dessert and meal space, including Red Baron, Freschetta® and Mrs. Smith's®. The agency is also AOR for Schwan's Home Service®, helping drive awareness and acquisition for the national home delivery offering. The practice works with

Unilever's Country Crock® and helped architect a powerful campaign designed to encourage families to eat more vegetables. Called "A Very Veggie World," the initiative featured a colorful recipe book that generated 500,000 downloads.

The agency manages PR for Green Mountain Coffee K-Cup® brands, which featured an Ambassador Program that drove incremental sales. M Booth created compelling programs to introduce the brand's Hot Apple Cider and Lemonade variants. For Barista Prima Coffeehouse K-Cup® packs, we increased awareness and trial via targeted media outreach, in-person sampling events and a strategic partnership.

M Booth's innovative Better4You offering continues to help brands communicate healthful innovations. Bolstered by a board of leading national advisors in nutrition, health and parenting, the team created a media campaign touting the nutritional benefits of Pirate's Booty snacks over potato chips. For Mrs. Dash, the salt-free seasoning, we helped grow the brand's Facebook page 25-fold by engaging consumers around heart healthy recipes. Our food experience also includes work for the Reese's®, the National Pasta Association, Ronzoni®, Sun Crystals® sweetener and Wish-Bone® dressings.

The agency's Wine & Spirits team added Banfi Vintners to its roster of top-shelf brands. As AOR for ten years representing the Scotch portfolio of Rémy Cointreau USA, Inc., including The Macallan® Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Highland Park® Single Malt Scotch Whisky, and The Famous Grouse®, the team is known industry-wide for outreach to influencers and tastemakers through brand partnerships, events and tastings. We supported The Macallan's "Masters of Photography" series with Annie Leibovitz and brought the brand's key message platform of "Master Your Moment" to life in more than 170 stories.

Last year, M Booth was also named digital AOR for Krug Champagne responsible for all social media. M Booth is also AOR for Brugal Rum® as well as for NOLET'S® Finest Gins and Pernod Ricard USA's Kahlúa®. For Kahlúa®, the agency created the Delicioso



**Author and food artist Clare Crespo partnered with Country Crock® Spreads to introduce the book "A Very Veggie World," to dozens of editors and bloggers at an interactive cooking demo in New York. The book, which features an array of playful veggie designs including Molecular Brussels Sprouts and a Pizza Flag, triggered more than half a million downloads. Country Crock® is an M Booth client.**

Brunch Club leveraging Food Network Chef and Author Marcela Valladolid, and drove awareness for Kahlúa Iced Coffee Cans and Kahlúa Gingerbread via a cause-related partnership with One Warm Coat.

**MSLGROUP**

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**Renee Wilson, President,**  
*MSLGROUP North America*  
**Steve Bryant, Director, Food & Beverage**  
**Mike Russell, SVP, Sales & Business Development**

The Food & Beverage Specialty of MSLGROUP North America spans the entire food and beverage category from food marketing to communications for food commodities, packaged foods, foodservice, restaurant, healthcare, nutrition and pet foods. It houses our Culinary & Nutrition Center and operates in offices around the country representing leading food and beverage brands such as Nestle, Ferrero and Patron.

The MSLGROUP Culinary & Nutrition Center underscores the importance we place on the relevance of food and nutrition. In our test kitchens, we develop recipes and food applications that lend relevance to our culi-

nary and nutrition education programs. The center is managed by two full-time on-staff Registered Dietitians.

In addition, the Nutrition Marketing & Research Institute is the center's in-house think tank, conducting independent research and gaining insights into issues of importance to culinary and nutrition professionals. In 2012, we partnered with The Hartman Group on a landmark syndicated study called CLICKS & CRAVINGS: The Impact of Social Technology on Food Culture. In 2013 we plan to release another syndicated study with the Hartman Group about the U.S. Hispanic consumer and implications for food & beverage brands.

**MWW**

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www.mww.com

**Michael W. Kempner, Founder,**  
*President & Chief Executive Officer*  
**Alissa J. Blate, Executive Vice President,**  
*Global Consumer Marketing Practice Leader*

The food and beverage industry is in a constant state of evolution where shifting consumer tastes and preferences, new government regulation and volatile commodity

— Continued on page 32

**Yuengling**  
36% SALES INCREASE FOR LIGHT LAGER IN YEAR ONE

**ORTEGA**  
46% INCREASE IN FACEBOOK LIKES UP TO 107,188 FANS (AND COUNTING)

**TURKEY HILL**  
DRINKS AMERICA'S NUMBER 1 REFRIGERATED ICED TEA

**ICE CREAM** MOVED FROM #5 TO #4 BRAND NATIONALLY

**PAVONE** HUNGRY FOR RESULTS?

**Pavone's integration of PR, advertising and digital media has delivered some impressive results.**

**OGILVY**

Continued from page 31

markets are continually changing the landscape. In this environment, staying ahead of trends is the key to establishing and maintaining brand trust and relevance and seizing opportunities before your competitors do — while avoiding the pitfalls. At MWW, we establish relationships between brands and consumers through integrated public relations and

marketing activities that drive awareness, engagement and consideration. We expand media coverage beyond the food pages and into influential traditional and digital lifestyle outlets, creating brand relevance and developing emotional connections that drive trial and brand loyalty. Whether it's establishing a restaurant as a top-choice for dining or creating demand for coffee at an unlikely destination, we capitalize on trends to position our client brands as a vital ingredient in consumers' lifestyles. Our clients include: McDonald's, Atkins Nutritionals, D'Artagnan, Kendall-Jackson, The Hillshire Brands Company, Senseo Coffee, United Natural Foods,

View and download entire issues of *O'Dwyer's* magazine in PDF format, as well as hundreds of company profiles in our searchable online database.

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among many others.

**OGILVY PUBLIC RELATIONS WORLDWIDE**

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**Rachel Ufer, Senior Vice President, Business Development and External Relations**

Our deep, abiding and passionate love affair with all things related to what we eat, and the drinks we imbibe, has made us among the most sought after and relevant PR partners in this arena. Our respect, insights, relationships and track record with some of the world's greatest chefs, restaurateurs, mixologists and food purveyors has been critical to our ongoing successes in this category. Understanding the fickle tastes of today's discerning customer is built into our collective DNA and palettes.

Our proprietary on-the-ground, in the store, at the table, off the shelf research allows the team to develop fresh, strategic campaigns on behalf of our food and beverage clients including: Nestle, DuPont, KFC, Taco Bell, FAGE, among dozens of others.

Additionally, we have a staff of seasoned professionals — including in-house food and nutrition experts and a national network of RD consultants — that is in tune with current and future trends in food and beverage.

**PADILLA SPEER BEARDSLEY**

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**Tom Jollie, Senior VP, Consumer Products**  
**Gregory Tarmin, SVP, Managing Director, NY**

Padilla Speer Beardsley is an integrated communications firm with offices in Minneapolis and New York City. We launch prod-

ucts, create and reenergize brands, craft social-media campaigns and handle crises and product recalls. Our approach utilizes proprietary planning methodologies that provide insight, guide strategy and generate measurable outcomes, and our award-winning programs have driven business results for clients for more than 50 years.

Our experience includes work for Betty Crocker, Caribou Coffee, Cheerios, Cub Foods, Fiber One, Frito-Lay, GE, Gold Medal Flour, Golden Valley Microwave Foods, Jim Beam, Land O'Lakes, Lloyd's Barbeque Company, The Malt-O-Meal Company, Nature Valley, PepsiCo, Pillsbury, Progresso, Schell's Brewing Co., SUPERVALU, Total and Trix.

**PAVONE**

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www.pavone.net

**Michael Pavone, President and CEO**

You're hungry for one thing: Results. So are we.

At Pavone, we know what it takes to create modern media communications campaigns that get results.

For Yuengling, we were challenged with boosting sales of the brewer's Light Lager without cannibalizing sales of the flagship Lager brand. That's exactly what we did for America's Oldest Brewer, with a 36% increase in sales in year one and a 20% increase in year two — and a 10% increase in Lager sales.

To help Ortega tie its Mexican meals to the Big Game and build the brand's Facebook following, we created the "Ortega Bowl." The Facebook game scored more than 146,000 plays in just three weeks and spurred a 46% increase in Facebook fans.

Turkey Hill's goals were to promote its status as the Official Ice Cream of the New York Yankees and increase sales of its beverage lineup. Thanks to each integrated campaign, sales of ice cream pints in New York were up 30% and beverage sales

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# ORDER PR'S MOST USEFUL DIRECTORY!

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- ✓ Easy-to-use, PR firms sorted geographically and by 22 types of PR specialties. Firms listed alphabetically.
- ✓ Articles on how to hire and use a PR firm by industry experts Jack O'Dwyer and Fraser Seitel.
- ✓ 7,000+ clients are cross-indexed. O'Dwyer's Directory of PR firms is the only place you can look up a company and determine its outside counsel.



Researchers presented the latest science on the health benefits of tea at the USDA during the Fifth International Scientific Symposium on Tea & Human Health, organized by Pollock Communications

**PAVONE**

— Continued from page 32

increased 20%.

Pavone also develops a free annual national food and beverage trends report, which helps brands understand the most important factors shaping their industry. Contact us to schedule a trends presentation.

**PIERSON GRANT  
PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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www.highimpactdigital.com

**Maria Pierson, CEO**  
**Jane Grant, President**

Pierson Grant’s fresh thinking builds brand identity and boosts sales for food and beverage clients. The full-service firm generates publicity for openings and product introductions, brings creativity to special events and community relations and leverages the power of social media through its High Impact Digital division. Experienced members of the professional staff are skilled at issues management for food and beverage clients.

Clients include International Dairy Queen and Olive Garden, among others. The firm also provides strategic public relations and marketing services for emerging companies and franchisors, such as Zona Fresca. Based in

Fort Lauderdale with a satellite office in Raleigh, N.C., Pierson Grant is a member of the IPREX global network.

**POLLOCK  
COMMUNICATIONS**

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lpollockpr.com

**Louise Pollock, President**

Pollock Communications is an independent PR and marketing communications agency that offers cutting edge expertise for food, nutrition, health & wellness and beverage clients. Founded in 1991, Pollock pioneered communications for the functional food movement, creating some of the major food trends of the past 10 years including making tea the healthy drink of the new millennium and making chocolate a healthy indulgence. We know how to capitalize on emerging health and wellness trends in a credible way, with media, consumers and health professionals. Our knowledge of the latest research and science in the health & nutrition arena and our understanding of food policy enables us to deliver actionable consumer and market insights and practical health & lifestyle wellness benefits for brands and commodities.

Our staff includes Registered Dietitians with on-air and editorial experience who can address the health & nutrition issues that are top-of-mind for today’s editors and

reporters — including those who serve as trusted “watchdogs” for family gatekeepers. We have developed innovative social media programs to reach the key consumer, health & wellness influencers online. Over the last two decades, Pollock has cultivated long-term relationships and trained a network of spokespeople, including media Registered Dietitians and celebrity chefs who are available and ready to deliver key messages for a variety of our clients in broadcast, print and social media.

Clients: Ajinomoto Food Ingredients, LLC, American Society for Hypertension, Brassica Protection Products, LLC, Cranberry Institute, Cranberry Marketing Committee, PepsiCo Global Nutrition Group, Prestige Brands: FiberChoice and Beano, Purdue Products, Tea Council of the USA, Unilever Brands: Promise, Country Crock and I Can’t Believe It’s Not Butter!, USA Rice Federation, and Winning Combination: Vitamins, Bodylogix.

**RBB PUBLIC  
RELATIONS**

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305/448-7450  
www.rbbpr.com

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

Four-time “PR Agency of the Year” winner, rbb Public Relations is a national marketing PR firm that helps food and beverage brands breakout from the competition, and motivate and influence customers.

Working with Vlasic, rbb received a 2012 *PR News* Digital PR Award for social networking. In addition, the firm’s food and beverage client roster includes established brands like Duncan Hines and Mrs. Butterworth’s as well as new entries like Miami Cocktail Company.

rbb offers best practices in media relations, corporate and crisis communications, product introductions and digital/social media, and gives its clients strategic counsel and results with the individual attention only a boutique agency can provide. Find out how rbb can help your brand break out by visiting [www.rbbpr.com](http://www.rbbpr.com) or call 305/448-7457.

**RFIBINDER**

950 Third Avenue, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
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Twitter: @rfbinder

**Amy Binder, CEO**

Today, the food and beverage industry faces new challenges, as well as new opportunities, with growing interest from consumers about the food they eat and the products they buy. Eating and cooking fresh foods, choosing healthy food options and using seasonal ingredients are definite trends that are receiving significant coverage nationally. Moreover, issues around health, obesity, food safety, GMO and ingredient labeling continue to be a frequent topic of conversation. Continued attention from policy makers, advocacy groups and consumers on nutrition brings a whole new dimension to promoting food categories and brands.

All these factors make for dynamic market situations and the need for flexible communications strategies. RF|Binder’s nimble structure and attunement to the fast-paced changes in the food industry and the food culture as a whole, enable us to respond quickly to meet our clients’ needs. Drawing from deep experience and knowledge of the evolving food and beverage world, RF|Binder has worked in every aspect of food and beverage marketing and public relations, creating award-winning programs for clients ranging from Dunkin’ Donuts to Cargill, from Talenti Gelato e Sorbetto to Wines of Germany. RF|Binder works across the supermarket aisles from frozen to dairy, from ethnic cuisine to mainstream products and from staples to condiments. In addition, the RF|Binder team works with QSRs, high-end restaurants, specialty stores, retailers, as well as with CPG products and specialty brands.

RF|Binder brings market and industry insight, research-based strategy, and creative programming to its clients, as well as access to the key influencers shaping public opinion in the food and beverage space. We provide a wide array of services, from consumer promotions, influencer and traditional media outreach to digital and social media programs, issues management, trade and investor relations. Our staff has extensive experience in promoting consumer packaged

goods, prepared and imported foods, ingredients, grocers, restaurants and beverages, like wines, spirits and coffee. We promote brands, products and services, but we also routinely deal with the most challenging issues in the space, including recalls, labeling, FDA actions, safety and regulation.

Current and recent clients include Atkins Nutritionals, Baskin-Robbins, Cargill's Truvia® natural sweetener, Chilean Specialty Foods, The Culinary Trust, Dr. Praeger's, Dunkin' Donuts, Edible Schoolyard NYC, The Hershey Company's Scharffen Berger Chocolate Maker and Dagoba Organic Chocolate, Kayem Foods, The Malaysian Trade Commission (Malaysia Kitchen for the World), Miller Coors (Pilsner Urquell), Smith & Wollensky, Talenti Gelato e Sorbetto, Wegmans, Vinho Verde, Wines of Germany, Wines of Sicily and YoCrunch.

**ROGERS & COWAN**

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Fax: 310/854-8106  
www.rogersandcowan.com

**Tom Tardio, CEO**  
**Melissa Schumer, EVP**

Rogers & Cowan is a full-service entertainment marketing and PR agency offering consumer brands access and alliances with the powerful influences of the entertainment industry as well as an insider's point of view on lifestyle and consumer trends. The agency has extensive expertise in the food and beverage categories working with packaged and bottled goods companies, entertainment brands and content, and wine, beer and spirit brands. Our teams provide food and beverage brands publicity and marketing campaigns, special event support, sponsorship activation, celebrity/influential seeding, promotional tie-ins, brand integration and social media strategies audits, campaign design, execution and measurement for our clients.

We work with clients to launch new products, build awareness for national and international advertising campaigns, promote charitable initiatives, drive viewership for their television and digital content, leverage celebrity spokespeople for media opportunities, integrate products into entertainment con-

tent, build and manage online communities, execute social media strategies and maximize awareness of sports and entertainment sponsorships and alliances, among others.

Recent clients/projects have included the launch of EKOCYCLE with will.i.am and The Coca-Cola Company, Sprite Refreshing Films, Kraft Real Women of Philadelphia featuring Paula Deen, Fanta Search for the 4th Fantana, Dasani Plant Bottle Launch, Coke Zero promotion tied to Mission Impossible IV, Wines that Rock, Sobieski Vodka, Betty Crocker, Lucky Charms, Wheaties Fuel, General Mills, Food Network, The Cooking Channel and Dylan's Candy Bar.

**RUDER FINN, INC.**

301 East 57th Street  
New York, NY 10022  
212/593-6400  
www.ruderfinn.com

**Kathy Bloomgarden, CEO**  
**John McInerney, Senior Vice President, Brand Marketing**  
**Andrea Kurtz, Vice President**

In today's food and beverage industry, media is just one touch point for consumers and there are more products and technology vying for consumers' attention than ever. We help connect brands with emerging digital platforms and start-ups to engage consumers in new and innovative ways while also helping to foster entrepreneurial approaches to differentiating themselves in the market.

We also recognize that more and more, brands have fans that serve as powerful ambassadors. And to truly engage with fans, brands need an innovative and authentic communications strategy that encourages brand-to-fan connections. With this in mind, our emphasis is on activities that drive community building and digital engagement.

Ruder Finn works with food and beverage clients to develop and implement plans around event activations, product launches, sustaining product growth and visibility, brand partnerships as well as corporate social responsibility, environmental and health & wellness initiatives and more. Because each brand is different, we believe there is no one-size-fits-all approach to how to maximize impact.

Our experience also tells us that true connections in the food and beverage space are made by high-



Taylor develops strategic marketing communications programs for category leading food and beverage brands, including Diageo's Captain Morgan spiced rum. Here, Taylor worked with the brand to fund an archeological dive off the coast of Panama to uncover lost 17th century ships that belonged to the real life Captain Henry Morgan as part of an integrated marketing platform created and executed by the award winning agency.

lighting both product attributes and the visceral consumer reaction to a brand's image. We work with clients to create meaningful content that resonates with consumers including engaging visuals and videos, and dynamic stories for digital and traditional mediums, helping brands to identify with existing and new consumers.

Current and past clients include Mondelez International, Pepsi, Caribou Coffee, Mountain Dew, Gerber, Propel, Quaker Oats, Kellogg's, Chateau Margaux and Moët Hennessy Diageo.

**SCHNEIDER ASSOCIATES**

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**Joan Schneider, President & Creative Director**  
**Phil Pennellatore, Chief Operating Officer/Partner**  
**Julie Hall, Executive Vice President/Partner**

How do you make ice cream newsworthy in winter or turn the launch of an e-commerce site into a cool consumer event? Ask the Consumer Group at Schneider Associates. We are passionate about discovering, strategizing and executing campaigns to launch and sustain the growth of our clients'

products and brands. We pride ourselves on developing creative, innovative and measurable campaigns designed with a 360-degree approach to keep you in the news year round. From launching new products to reinvigorating icon products, we are rock stars at creating news that leads to awareness, accelerates growth and positions your business for success.

We know how to craft communications and social marketing programs that solve business challenges for brands. Multi-unit marketing is also a specialty — whether it's creating grand opening events or launching new products or programs, we make the cash register ring for franchisees. Services include messaging, media relations, social marketing, special events, spokesperson training, influencer outreach and crisis communications, among others. Learn more at www.schneiderpr.com

We're always launching new ideas. Let's launch yours.

**TAYLOR**

The Empire State Building  
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www.taylorstrategy.com

**Tony Signore, CEO & Managing Partner**  
**Mark Beal, Managing Partner**

Taylor partners exclusively with category leading consumer brands

Continued on page 36

**TAYLOR**

Continued from page 35

that utilize lifestyle, sports, and entertainment platforms to engage consumers and drive business growth.

*The Holmes Report's* "Consumer Agency of the Decade," Taylor has more than 100 employees with headquarters in New York and offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, Charlotte and London. The agency provides a full array of services including: brand planning; digital strategy and social media; strategic media relations; consumer insights; measurement and evaluation; event production, Hispanic/multicultural; and spokesperson procurement and training.

Taylor develops strategic marketing communications programs for a number of category leading food and beverage brands, including — for the past 25 years — Diageo, the world's leading premium drinks business. For Diageo, Taylor has successfully launched new products, reinvigorated iconic brands and sustained momentum in the marketplace for adult beverage favorites such as Crown Royal, Guinness, Captain Morgan, Smirnoff and Sterling wines, among others.

Taylor also partners with Nestle, for innovative product introductions in the frozen foods, ice cream, and candy categories; Coca-Cola, in support of the Coke Zero brand's sponsorship of the NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four; and Taco Bell, for a variety of product introductions and sports sponsorship activations.

**TREVELINO/KELLER**

King Plow Arts Center  
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www.trevelinokeller.com

Trevelino/Keller is one of the most sought after food and beverage agencies in the country for emerging and middle market corporate-owned and franchisor-managed multi-unit concepts. Specializing in reputation management through public

relations, social media, branding and marketing, the firm works closely with its clients on concept and product launches, brand revitalization or scaling concepts. In 2013, the firm is rolling out a unique collaboration of four companies cutting across concept incubation, culinary arts, brand extension and reputation management under the "Consume Project."

Experienced in fine dining, casual, fast casual and quick service as well as packaged goods for foodservice, grocery and specialty, the firm will feature one of the country's most experienced teams. With a changing marketplace, the firm's ambition is to get out in front of the market in relation to supporting a more responsible food society, promoting companies with healthy nutritional strategies, organics, sustainability and local initiatives. The firm's work with TCBY included the launch of its "Super Fro-Yo," a super nutritional classification that distinguishes the brand from others in the category. In 2012, the firm worked closely with the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness to introduce Gluten Free certification. For further information please email us at dtrevelino@trevelinokeller.com.

**WCG**

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**Jim Weiss**, Chairman & CEO, W2O Group  
**Bob Pearson**, President, W2O Group  
**Craig Alperowitz**, Practice Leader, Consumer

WCG is a global communications company offering integrated marketing services to clients in consumer packaged goods, food and beverage. Among our clients, we service Red Bull, Hershey's, E&J Gallo Winery, General Mills, Hillshire Brands, and Stubb's Legendary BBQ sauce.

As part of the W2O Group, WCG is creating the positive future of communications by providing advance analytics and social listening to each marketing discipline.

Established in 2001 by Jim Weiss, a 25-year veteran in com-

munications, the agency has grown to over 275 employees serving clients from offices in San Francisco, New York, Austin, Los Angeles and London.

WCG's seasoned professionals specialize in analytics, public relations, branding, design, digital, social and traditional marketing, location based marketing, investor and advocacy relations and grassroots direct-to-consumer campaigns.

The company was named the 2011 Digital Agency of the Year by the *Holmes Report*, was ranked #5 of Top Independent PR Firms and was ranked #7 on *PRWeek's* 2011 US Agency Rankings.

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

**WEBER SHANDWICK**

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**Gail Heimann**, President and Chief Strategy Officer  
**Cathy Calhoun**, President North America  
**Janet Helm, MS, RD**, Chief Food and Nutrition Strategist, North America

Weber Shandwick has built one of the largest food and nutrition practices in North America. Our clients include many of the world's leading food companies, and we've been behind some of the most iconic campaigns for food brands in the country. Weber Shandwick also has deep expertise in turning commodities into brands with award-winning campaigns. Our work in food spans from the functional to indulgent, and we have successfully launched new products, reinvigorated brands, leveraged scientific research and changed the way consumers and influencers think about specific foods or ingredients.

The food and nutrition practice is staffed by some of the industry's most strategic senior counselors and content experts — including registered dietitians, PhD nutrition scientists, former and current journalists and trained chefs. These imbedded experts have extensive experience in public-private partner-

ships, alliance building, food and agriculture policy, food regulations, sustainability, food safety and crisis communications.

We have strong relationships with food and nutrition influencers, including registered dietitians and bloggers, who are increasingly influencing the media landscape. To help cut through the clutter of nutrition information online and elevate the voice of registered dietitians, Weber Shandwick supported the creation of the Nutrition Blog Network — an aggregator of more than 400 blogs written by registered dietitians. Our specialists have extensive experience in engaging the communities that matter most to our food and beverage clients.

**ZENO GROUP**

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**Barby K. Siegel, CEO**

Zeno Group is a public relations and marketing communications agency committed to developing recipes for success for clients at every meal. Our global teams have vast experience delivering integrated, content-driven campaigns that inspire consumers to take action and change behavior. We are at the table with some of the world's leading food, beverage, and nutrition brands inserting them into the worlds of health, wellness and pop culture.

Our work is grounded in target audience and culture insights from our planning team. Senior leaders don't just take care of the check; they're right there in the kitchen with the rest of the team, creating, stirring and tasting along the way. What sets Zeno apart is that we are not afraid to challenge the status quo and push the limits to help make our clients stand out from the crowd. Currently at Zeno, we are working with clients including Pizza Hut, Seattle's Best Coffee, Evolution Fresh, El Pollo Loco, Bacardi Rums, Nature's Path, Lipton Tea, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Pinkberry and Daiya Foods. ●

# O'DWYER'S RANKINGS OF FOOD & BEVERAGE PR FIRMS

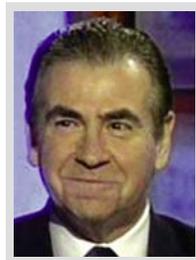
1. Edelman	New York	\$75,465,749	29. Fahlgren Mortine	Columbus	723,537
2. APCO Worldwide	Wash., D.C.	10,217,420	30. Schneider Associates	Boston	690,000
3. Hunter PR	New York	7,593,065	31. Gibraltar Associates	Wash., D.C.	617,676
4. MWW	E. Rutherford, NJ	6,179,000	32. rbb Public Relations	Miami	608,507
5. Taylor	New York	5,605,000	33. IW Group	W. Hollywood	588,000
6. Formula PR	San Diego	5,115,780	34. J Public Relations	San Diego	520,153
7. RF   Binder Partners	New York	4,700,000	35. At The Table Public Relations	Tampa	437,639
8. CRT/tanaka	Richmond, VA	4,627,546	36. Catalyst PR	New York	429,347
9. Coyne PR	Parsippany, NJ	4,382,000	37. Lee & Associates	Los Angeles	421,811
10. Regan Comms. Group	Boston	4,110,000	38. Padilla Speer Beardsley	Minneapolis	391,265
11. M Booth & Associates	New York	3,945,576	39. Blaze	Santa Monica	375,100
12. FoodMinds	Chicago	3,515,753	40. Kaplow	New York	350,000
13. 5W Public Relations	New York	3,400,000	41. Richmond PR	Seattle	265,155
14. Zeno Group	New York	3,332,400	42. Trevelino/Keller	Atlanta	250,000
15. Ruder Finn	New York	2,476,956	43. Rosica Communications	Parsippany, NJ	240,668
16. Maloney & Fox	New York	2,430,200	44. Stuntman PR	New York	184,685
17. Jackson Spalding	Atlanta	2,208,839	45. Maccabee	Minneapolis	181,066
18. Dye, Van Mol & Lawrence	Nashville	1,875,196	46. Quinn & Co.	New York	150,403
19. Linhart PR	Denver	1,673,330	47. Seigenthaler PR	Nashville	147,000
20. O'Malley Hansen Comms.	Chicago	1,428,000	48. CJ Public Relations	Farmington, CT	141,120
21. Lane PR	Portland, OR	1,395,237	49. Morgan & Myers	Waukesha, WI	113,771
22. French   West   Vaughan	Raleigh	1,226,950	50. Rasky Baerlein Strat. Comms.	Boston	107,971
23. Levick Strategic Comms.	Wash., D.C.	1,210,640	51. Gregory FCA	Ardmore, PA	100,000
24. Finn Partners	New York	1,206,000	52. TransMedia Group	Boca Raton	100,000
25. Kohnstamm Comms.	St. Paul	1,167,197	53. McNeely Pigott & Fox	Nashville	67,959
26. Allison+Partners	San Francisco	1,100,000	54. Luckie Strategic PR	Birmingham, AL	63,568
27. WordHampton	E. Hampton	920,103	55. Red Sky PR	Boise	56,918
28. Lambert, Edwards & ASSOCS.	Grand Rapids	780,000	56. Public Communications Inc.	Chicago	43,008

# Presentation management: treading on water

By Fraser Seitel

I don't mean to be "political" but ... the Republican Party is in such disarray, it can't even present its shiniest star without becoming the butt of ridicule.

I speak, of course, about Senator Marco Rubio's "water torture" in the service of the Republican Rebuttal to President Obama's State of the Union address.



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

Rubio's response to Obama's barn burner was passable, at times even inspirational, but it was ruined by the young senator's runaway case of dry mouth, leading to his now legendary lunge for an out-of-the-frame

bottle of Poland Spring. Liberals leapt on that awkward water break, and otherwise stellar parts of the speech were forgotten.

The blame lies squarely with the Republican Party.

Part of the job of any public relations counselor is to serve as "producer" for his client's presentation. The aim is to present the client in the very best light, and

that means "staging" a production that is choreographed to succeed — from the lighting to the camera angles to the water on the table.

The State of the Union, for example, is a rigorously choreographed presentation.

From its glad-handing run up to the President's entrance to the historic declaration by the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives to the President's slow walk down the aisle through well-wishers to the Speaker's solemn introduction to the well-planned applause lines — the State of the Union is a public relations production, pure and simple, designed to spotlight the leader in the arena addressing his minions.

And it works.

Likewise, the Republican Rebuttal is a TV show, so it should be choreographed as such and not treated as a barren exposure of the poor shnook who drew the short straw.

With the shabby way the Republicans set up their new savior — a barren room with a teleprompter and hot TV lights, bereft of an audience, with no water within reach — Rubio was literally walking into the Valley of the Shadow of Death, doomed to fail. Which he did.

There's no rule that says this toughest of tough speeches — which this annual Rebuttal most certainly is — must be delivered in such Spartan conditions. It's a TV show for God's sakes. And it must be treated as such.

Here's what the wrong-way Republicans should consider for next year's State of the Union Rebuttal.

### More comfortable setting

As noted, Rubio was doomed once he walked into that claustrophobic little room, with the embarrassing family photo propped up on the desk behind him.

Why not make it a more comfortable, informal setting? You can't beat the formality of a Joint Session of Congress, so why try? Rubio is a young, hip listener of rap music. So why present him as just another stuffy, formal, angry Republican?

Mitch McConnell and John Boehner, he ain't. Thank God! So next time, loosen up the set ... get him an easy chair ... put him at a table.

Reduce the formality.

### Studio audience

Get him some listeners.

While the President has the luxury not

only of the canned, on-cue applause, he's also got the benefit of all the TV reaction shots. Were he to pause for a sip of water, no one would mind; there are a lot of other people on which the camera can focus.

Rubio had no such luxury. He, like the battered Bobby Jindal four years before him, stayed in the headlights for all 10 excruciating minutes; no pauses, no breaks, no chance to reach for a water break without Twitter lighting up like Christopher Dorner's cabin.

Not only was it unfair to Rubio; it was also stupid and the antithesis of how this particular young man should be presented.

Rubio, like Obama, connects with an audience. That's his strength. He encourages reactions from listeners and responds naturally when they offer it. In fact, it is his accessibility that is precisely the reason Republicans have anointed him as their new spokesman.

So why not place him with a small audience at a table or in chairs or in a town hall circular setting? Anything to break out of the straightjacket of one talking head on screen for an interminable period.

### Hydrate him

Is it conceivable that a young man making his first national speech before millions of curious countrymen in answer to a newly-reelected President might just require an occasional water break?

Ya' think?

So give him a high table or lectern or counter or something on which he might place a glass — a "glass," not a cheap plastic bottle! — of water. Don't make the poor kid reach across the frame for an unadorned bottle of Poland Spring, while Chris Matthews and Rachel Maddow, not to mention David Letterman and Jimmy Kimmel, salivate at the good fortune the liberal gods have landed them.

Thank goodness, the bottle was already open and Rubio didn't have to face further embarrassment of struggling with the cap.

Marco Rubio's 2013 "Water Bottle Gate" ought to be the final straw to make Republicans tear up the rebuttal play book and rethink the whole presentation; right after, that is, they fire all the clueless consultants who had a hand in Sen. Rubio's self-immolation. ●

## People in PR

### GOLLUST DITCHES CUOMO FOR CNN

Allison Gollust has returned to the broadcast PR scene, a mere four months after taking the Communications Director job for New York Governor Andrew Cuomo.

Effective March 1, Gollust became Senior VP of Communications for CNN Worldwide.

She is in charge of messaging and execution for CNN U.S., HLN, CNN.com and CNN en Espanol, and leading PR teams in New York, Washington, Atlanta and Los Angeles.

In her new role, Gollust now reports to Jeff Matteson, Senior Vice President of Communications at Turner Broadcasting System.

The CNN job marks a reunion between Gollust and Jeff Zucker, who recently took the helm of CNN with the mandate of shaking up the Time Warner property. ●



Gollust

# How to reach the next level in PR

By Richard Goldstein

**M**any PR agencies reach out to advisors to learn what's necessary to reach the next level. In my view, preparing and implementing a strategic business plan is the key to reaching the next level. While elements of the plan may differ by agency, I believe there are certain areas that must be considered in order to be successful. What is the next level? For some it's reaching the \$1 million revenue mark, for others it is \$2 million or even over \$5 million.



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

## Million dollar milestone

According to Rick Gould of StevensGouldPincus, reaching \$1 million in net revenues is a major milestone in the growth and profitability of a PR firm. According to Gould, when a PR firm owner surpasses \$1 million in net revenues their attitude changes. Their confidence builds. It puts them in a different class, a different grouping: The Million Dollar Milestone.

Getting to \$2 million is a challenge. According to Gould, when you decide to move from \$1 million to \$2 million you're building an infrastructure and brand. Building an effective staff at different levels creates a pyramid that's powerful and attractive. You'll also need to consider putting in place more focused management and administration. Rather than moving in this direction, you do it yourself — mistake! Wearing every hat will only bog you and the firm down.

## Hitting the \$2 million dollar mark

If you lack well thought out plans, you will most probably get stuck. If you have not figured it out, the higher you go the more infrastructure you need. Additionally, you'll need to benchmark your competition at each level to understand what the best practices are at each level. If you're not willing to do this, it's best to consider a merger. If your firm is "stuck," believe me you'll lose your best talent to larger and more structured firms.

I found a column in the December 2012 issue of *The CPA Journal* written by Greg Crabtree, a management consultant. I also wrote a client newsletter on this subject. Here are some ideas from both.

1. Drive to 15% pretax profit by the time the business reaches \$1 million in revenue. Growing fast and unprofitable is a sure bet to bankruptcy or in the hands of a buyer who will pick up your broken pieces for a song.

2. In calculating the 15% profit, the owner needs to take a "market based wage."

3. Strive to build the cash balance to two months profit without drawing on a line of credit.

4. Once you reach the 15% mark, the owner can make the next key hire and allow profit to drop to no less than 10%. Hold salaries constant until the firm again reaches the 15% mark. Hire one or two key hires and repeat the process. You may not be able to fund business growth completely from existing cash, so consider a line of credit not to exceed 50% of accounts receivable.

5. Once a 15% profitability is reached and maintained for three to six months, the owner may not need to reinvest profits and may decide to go on a "spending spree." Don't let poor judgment put you behind the "eight ball."

6. Write a mission statement and believe it. Don't know how to do this? Go to the websites of your competition and read their mission statements.

7. Understand the difference between

"selling and "marketing." Marketing gets you in the door, but selling closes the door. It's not the same as selling a car!

8. Get an initial financial check up to establish a benchmark for your firm. Follow this up quarterly.

9. Make sure your employee benefits package and incentive compensation program is competitive.

10. Make sure your accounting and time keeping system is solid and provides you the information you need to run your firm.

11. Institute a continuous improvement management philosophy.

## Pay attention to basics

So, you've grown your agency to a \$2 million revenue firm but your profits are dismal. According to Al Croft, publisher of *Management Strategies for Public Relations Firms*, dismal profits are usually caused by principals not paying attention to one or more or all of some basic economic factors: Hourly rates are too low; staff utilization rates that are below industry standards; inaccurate or no time keeping; no tracking individual client profitability, or over-servicing clients, which can usually be pinned on either improper budgeting or more time invested in the client's behalf than he or she is paying for.

If you ignore or mishandle one of these factors, it will affect your bottom line. ●



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## Justice PA chief exits for firm

**T**racy Schmalzer, who heads public affairs for the U.S. Dept. of Justice, is leaving March 8 for a slot at ASGK Public Strategies, the firm founded by Obama advisor David Axelrod.

Schmalzer's four-year tenure at the Justice Dept., where she was the top spokeswoman and key aide to Attorney General Eric Holder, included PR victories like the defense of the Affordable Care Act and large settlements with mortgage brokers and oil giant BP, as well as crises like the "Fast and Furious" gun scandal.

In a statement, Holder thanked Schmalzer for her "wise counsel, loyalty, good humor and unwavering support of me."

Schmalzer is slated for a Managing Director role with ASGK, which operates in D.C., New York and Chicago. AT&T and Edelman PR veteran Eric Sedler is Managing Partner of the firm.

She previously led public affairs for Yahoo! in Washington and communications director to Sen. Pat Leahy (D-Vt.). She started out as a reporter in Vermont and Massachusetts.

The Justice Dept. has not yet named a successor. Gina Talamona, a Justice vet, and Nanda Chitre, a former Clinton White House press deputy, are currently Deputy Directors. ●



Schmalzer

## Irion takes Levick Pres. post

**M**ark Irion, former CEO of Dutko Worldwide lobbying firm, is the new President of Levick. Founder & CEO Richard Levick adds the Chairman title.

Irion, who assumed Dutko's top spot in 2003, led the management team that sold it to Huntsworth's Grayling in 2009.

Irion departed early last year from the CEO of Dutko Grayling and chief of Grayling's PA practice slots.

Under Levick's leadership, the Washington-based firm is known for its corporate, crisis communications and litigation PR efforts.

Irion is expected to build on that base, plus Levick's digital communications savvy, to expand into the PA and issues advocacy categories.

He told *O'Dwyer's* that he wants to marry his "face-to-face" communications expertise with Levick's creative bent to forge "emotional messages" that resonate with a client's targeted audiences throughout the world.

That calls for an expansion of Levick's physical footprint beyond Washington, both in the U.S. and overseas.

Irion sees the opportunity to craft a "new, new" public policy communications platform. at Levick. ●



Irion



## F-H grabs Clinton aide as GM

**F**leishman-Hillard has handed the reins of its Washington, D.C., office to Kris Balderston, a deputy chief of staff to Sen. Hillary Clinton who followed her to the State Department.

Bill Pengergast, who led the D.C. office for the past three years as GM, has relocated to Dallas.

Balderston recently served as special representative for State's Global Partnership Initiative, Clinton's push to engage private businesses, universities and other groups for issues like HIV/AIDS, human rights and climate change.

At F-H, he takes the senior partner and general manager titles in D.C. Martha Boudreau, an F-H President and Senior Partner who covers the Mid-Atlantic and Latin America for the firm, praised

Balderston's understanding of the "intersection" of business, government and communications.

Before moving to the State Dept., he was Clinton's deputy chief of staff from 2002-09 and earlier worked cabinet affairs in the Clinton White House. Earlier stints included posts with Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis, Sen. Majority Leader George Mitchell and the Dept. of Labor during the Clinton administration.

F-H is part of Omnicom.

F-H's federal work has recently included the Depts. of Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Agriculture and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. ●

## JDA taps Billeter for digital post

**C**hris Billeter, previously with right-leaning PR shop, DCI Group, has joined JDA Frontline in D.C. as VP of digital media.

The firm has also added Tommy Schultz, communications director for the GOP push for Mitt Romney in New Hampshire, as a director.

JDA last month added Kevin Sheridan, an Edelman alumn who handled communications for Rep. Paul Ryan during Romney's presidential campaign, as a VP.

Billeter was previously a deputy e-campaign director for the National Republican Congressional Committee. ●

## FTI banks Chapter 11 help for Bahrain Bank

**F**TI Consulting is bolstering communications for troubled Bahraini investment bank Arcapita Bank BSC, which filed a reorganization plan to sell of its assets and regroup under Chapter 11 protection on Feb. 8.

The bank, which operates in Atlanta, London and Singapore in addition to the UAE, is the first Gulf company to file for bankruptcy in the U.S. under Ch. 11 rules, according to Reuters.

“We are committed to confirming the plan and exiting Chapter 11 as quickly as possible,” said Atif Abdulmalik, CEO of Arcapita, which filed for bankruptcy last March.

The company’s plan could lead to liquidation of \$7 billion in assets, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, a contrast to the “confident tone Arcapita struck when it” first filed last year.

FTI, which has operated in Bahrain since 2003 and counted Arcapita as a longtime client, acquired Citigate’s Dubai office in 2006.

FTI Managing Director Hugh Barker heads the Arcapita work. ●

## DLA Piper tunes in Al Jazeera

**D**LA Piper has signed on to represent Al Jazeera America Holdings, which last month announced a \$100M deal to acquire Al Gore and Joel Hyatt’s Current TV.

FARA News



### NEW FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT FILINGS

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

**Sorini, Samet & Associates, LLC**, Hinsdale, IL, **registered January 24, 2013 for Societe Nationale des Parcs Industriels (SONAPI)**, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to provide analytical support, drafting of written materials, contacts with government, private sector and civil society organizations in support of modification of trade legislation.

**Podesta Group, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., **registered January 31, 2013 for Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan**, Washington, D.C., to assist in communicating priority issues in the United States-Azerbaijan bilateral relationship to relevant U.S. audiences, including the U.S. Congress, executive branch, media, and policy community.

**Gephardt Group Government Affairs, LLC**, Washington, D.C., **registered January 11, 2013 for Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States**, Washington, D.C., for strategic advice, lobbying, and government relations services as well as outreach to and advocacy before the Legislative Branch and the Executive Branch.

Lobbying News



### NEW LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT FILINGS

Below is a list of select companies that have registered with the Secretary of the Senate, Office of Public Records, and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Legislative Resource Center, Washington, D.C., in order to comply with the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995. For a complete list of filings, visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

**The JBH Group, LLC**, Upper Marlboro, MD, **registered February 20, 2013 for Mayors Against Illegal Guns Action Fund**, Washington, D.C., to develop and execute a federal legislative strategy related to legislation and regulation on gun policy.

**Ford & Huff LC**, Washington, D.C., **registered February 21, 2013 for National League of Postmasters**, Alexandria, VA, for postal service legislation.

**National Association for Gun Rights**, Windsor, CO, **registered February 19, 2013 for National Association for Gun Rights**, Windsor, CO, regarding firearm background checks, assault weapon ban and magazine capacity limitations.

**Penn Hill Group**, Washington, D.C., **registered February 19, 2013 for Microsoft Corporation**, Washington, D.C., for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) related issues and initiatives.

The firm is to handle “informational communications regarding client’s cable TV channel,” according to its federal lobbying report.

Current TV is available in 60 million U.S. households, while the Arab satellite TV network reaches about 5 million American households.

DLA’s team is led by Ignacio Sanchez (co-chair of its government affairs group) and John Merrigan (co-chair federal law & public policy group) and includes Mark Paoletta (aide to President Bush I) and Matthew Bernstein (aide to the late Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum.)

Hyatt, who was Metzenbaum’s son-in-law, unsuccessfully ran for his seat in 1994.

AL Jazeera is owned by the government of Qatar. ●

## Podesta inks \$960K Iraq deal

**P**odesta Group has inked a \$960,000 one-year pact with Iraq to develop a “strategic communication and PR plan,” according to the terms of its contract.

The contract’s objectives are to promote a better understanding within the U.S. of the Government of Iraq’s priorities and concerns and to promote the Strategic Framework Contract between the two countries.

Podesta is to maintain contact on behalf of Iraq with members of the Congress, reporters and non-governmental officials.

It is to be paid in quarterly installments by check in advance of each three-month period. Total expenses shall not exceed \$40,000 during the period of the contract.

Tony Podesta’s firm reports to Jabir Habeb Jabir, who became Iraq’s ambassador to the U.S. last month. ●

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION



**Monument Optimization**, Washington, DC. 202/904-5763. [john@monumentoptimization.com](mailto:john@monumentoptimization.com); [www.monumentoptimization.com](http://www.monumentoptimization.com). John Stewart, President.

While we specialize in search engine marketing, we are more than just an SEO firm. We blend a variety of marketing tactics to maximize the effectiveness and return on investment of search engine campaigns.

We excel in non-traditional search marketing environments where the next steps are rarely obvious and there are not any existing models to copy or fall back on.

Since every client's situation is unique, we focus to understand their specific needs and create customized solutions that accomplish their goals online.

## MEDIA & SPEAKER TRAINING



**Impact Communications**, 11 Bristol Place, Wilton, CT 06897-1524. (203) 529-3047; cell: (917) 208-0720; fax: (203) 529-3048; [JRImpact@aol.com](mailto:JRImpact@aol.com). Jon Rosen, President.

**BE PREPARED! Impact Communications trains your spokespeople** to successfully communicate critical messages to your targeted audiences during print, television, and radio news interviews. Your customized workshops are issue-driven and role-play based. Videotaping/critiquing. Groups/privately. Face-to-face/telephone interviews/news conferences. Private label seminars for public relations agencies.

**Make your next news interview your best by calling Jon Rosen, Impact Communications. Over 30 years of news media/training expertise.**

## WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT



**At Point, Inc.**, P.O. Box 361, Roseland, NJ 07068. 973/324-0866; fax: 973/324-0778. [services@atpoint.com](mailto:services@atpoint.com); [www.atpoint.com](http://www.atpoint.com). Mick Gyure.

At Point provides the services of developing websites and managing the Internet operations of businesses, both small and large, that do not have the experience or the resources in-house to perform these functions.

Clients receive personalized and high quality customer service, solutions that fit their budgets, and the assurance of At Point's reliability.

## PR JOBS - <http://jobs.odwyerpr.com>

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DC  
National Multi Housing Council
- Director of Public Relations**  
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**Browse by State**

- New York (9)
- Dist. Columbia (9)
- Connecticut (4)
- Virginia (3)
- Texas (2)
- North Carolina (2)
- New Jersey (2)
- Missouri (2)
- Michigan (2)
- Massachusetts (2)
- Illinois (2)
- California (2)

**Browse by Job Function**

- Public Relations (25)
- Communications (4)
- Other (3)
- Assistant Professor (3)
- Marketing/Advertising (2)

### Dir. of Public Relations & Editorial

The **Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan** is a dynamic, distinctive learning community that is consistently ranked among the world's leading business schools.

The Director of Public Relations (PR) & Editorial leads and manages a team that is responsible for utilizing earned and owned media to achieve overall school and client-specific goals for the Ross School of Business. This person and his/her team will create and disseminate content that is meaningful, relevant, and compelling to a sophisticated and global audience of business leaders and decision makers (e.g., prospective and current students, alumni, current and prospective donors, corporate partners, and media).

He/she will be an expert in the utilization of public relations, search, and social media to create and share compelling content that (1) organically reaches audiences searching for the right information at the right time, and (2) is available and distributed via owned media, (e.g., website, blogs, brochures, magazines). This position will enhance the school's reputation by presenting Ross - and its research and intellectual capital - as the expert and go-to source for help and information. This person will work closely with the marketing communications team to execute integrated communications that will deliver on established strategies established by the brand management team. He/she will work with the marketing analytics and research team to develop and monitor success metrics to evaluate each deployed tactic.

To apply, please visit: <http://umjobs.org> and apply to position 78191.



## OUR FIRST YEAR



### DEAR FRIENDS OF FINN PARTNERS:

When we started Finn Partners late in 2011, we said we would be defined by collaboration. Now, that collaborative approach defines who we are and what we do, and energizes our commitment to our client partners and to each other. Step off the elevator at the newly renovated reception area in our New York headquarters and that commitment springs to life in a dynamic video wall of images that illustrates the power of collaboration in the arts, in the sciences and in business.

Collaboration is at the core of our brand, and it's helped us achieve some powerful results. We have become one of the brightest stories in the PR business. Our 2011 US fees ranked us as one of the top ten independent agencies – in 2012 we achieved more than 30 percent growth (far above the growth rate of the PR industry) and were named new agency of the year by a leading trade publication. And while our name is new, we have a deeply rooted team. Our 30 Managing Partners, Senior Partners and Partners have worked together for an average of 10 years, and have a shared commitment to our mission and our future.

We are an agency of commitments. While we prize new business, we hold the importance of existing client relationships above all else.

And, we care about every one of our colleagues. Our first Finn Partners ad proudly displayed the names of the 180 people who work in our six offices. In 2012, our staff had grown to over 220, with a host of talented newcomers joining that original roster. Finn Partners is leading the industry with a very low turnover rate.

Finally, as we look to the future, we want to be an agency that makes a difference – through our award winning pro-bono work for numerous not-for-profit organizations, through the global peace work of my sister, Dena Merriam, who has joined me in launching Finn Partners, and through some of my own foundation work supporting the arts. Most of all we want to make a difference in the lives of the people who work here and, through business, in the lives of the clients we serve.

If you would like to know more, please contact me at [peter@finnpartners.com](mailto:peter@finnpartners.com) or at my direct line, which is **212-593-6428**.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter'.

Peter Finn

**FINN PARTNERS**

WELCOME TO THE PARTNERSHIP

