

# O'Dwyer's

Communications & New Media

March 2015 | Vol. 29 No. 3

**The food issue**

March 2015 | [www.odwyerpr.com](http://www.odwyerpr.com)



# A SUBSTANTIAL DOSE OF SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE CAN WORK MIRACLES IN HEALTHCARE.



*"Healthcare Agency of the Year" – The Holmes Report*

Gil Bashe  
212.508.9672  
gbashe@makovsky.com

Arielle Bernstein  
212.508.9632  
abernstein@makovsky.com

Tom Jones  
212.508.9633  
tjones@makovsky.com

Alexandra Peterson  
212.508.9709  
apeterson@makovsky.com

Lee Davies  
212.508.9651  
ldavies@makovsky.com

Laney Landsman  
212.508.9643  
llandsman@makovsky.com

# Discover what all the Buzz is about!



daily buzz

Broadcast, Print & Online  
Media Monitoring

You need to know where, when & how your brand is being mentioned. You need the information professionally hand-edited, easy to navigate, and delivered to your inbox on time, every time. You need Daily Buzz.

Prominent film studios, networks, & PR Firms rely on Daily Buzz to understand their media monitoring needs and offer industry-leading solutions. Let us do the same for you!

## (818) 260-8160

[info@mediamaxonline.com](mailto:info@mediamaxonline.com)



CBS FILMS



LIONSGATE



RELATIVITY

sundance

hulu pmkobnc



HarperCollins Publishers



THE LIPPIN GROUP

FOCUS  
FEATURES



Media Workflow & Monitoring Solutions

## EDITORIAL

Horde of lawyers chip away at freedoms.

## WALMART REAPS GOOD PR FOR WAGE HIKE

Walmart received positive press for decision to hike employee wages, but now faces another challenge.

## DIETARY GUIDELINES STIR CONTROVERSY

Historic proposals in the latest federal recommendations for dietary guidelines could affect U.S. food policy in a big way.

## REGULATIONS CONFUSE CONSUMERS ON SUPPS.

Dietary supplements have come under scrutiny, and PR pros bear a unique responsibility communicating with consumers on this issue.

## IS MISINFORMATION IN U.S. FEEDING OBESITY?

Studies show consumers want to make positive health changes, but are bombarded with diet fads and conflicting information.

## HOW RESTAURANTS SHOULD TREAT REVIEWS

Learning how to address customer comments online can often turn a negative into a net positive

## CHALLENGES FROM THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN

Never before in history have so many been able to consume so much, while simultaneously remaining malnourished.

## OMC, PUBLICIS, IP POST STRONG Q4 GAINS

As the global economy picks up steam, Omnicom, Publicis Groupe and Interpublic expect 2014's momentum to carry into this year.

6

8

9

10

12

14

16

17

18

## MILLENNIALS' UNIQUE FOCUS ON NUTRITION

A study of Millennials reveals telling details about this demographic's perspectives on health, diet, nutrition and well-being.

19

## SODA ALTERNATIVES GAIN IN FOLLOWING, PROFITS

As health consciousness grows, soda alternatives are becoming more prevalent within the beverage industry.

20

## IS THE U.S. EXPERIENCING HEALTH FATIGUE?

After years of messages regarding the importance of a healthy diet, consumer fatigue may be setting in.

21

## PEOPLE IN PR

22

## PROFILES OF FOOD & BEVERAGE PR FIRMS

35

## RANKINGS OF FOOD & BEVERAGE PR FIRMS

40

## WASHINGTON REPORT

## COLUMNS

36

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fraser Seitel

37

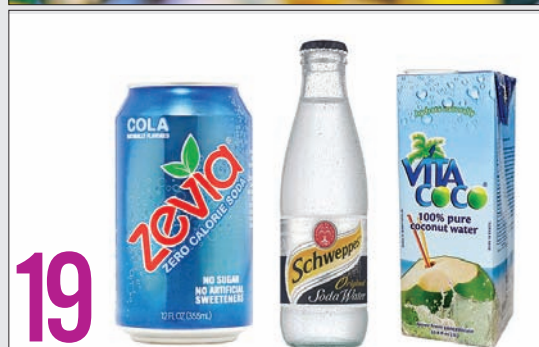
## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Richard Goldstein

38

## OPINION

Arthur Solomon



Cover photo by Cayla Zahoran and  
Food Styling by Allie Wist.

WWW.ODWYERPR.COM

Daily, up-to-the-minute PR news



## EDITORIAL CALENDAR 2015

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

## ADVERTISERS

Allidura Consumer.....	11	Makovsky.....	InsideCover
Artisan Production House.....	8	MediaMax Online.....	3
Bob Thomas Productions.....	9	Omega World Travel.....	25
Cision.....	7	Peppercomm.....	Back Cover
FoodMinds.....	13	RF Binder.....	15
ICR.....	5	Strauss Media Strategies.....	36
Log-On.....	33	TV Access.....	38



# MOVING THE NEEDLE ON CORPORATE REPUTATION



Sustainably moving the needle on corporate reputation and valuation requires tying all communications strategies and tactics to the financial goals of the company. With an intimate understanding of the capital markets as a starting point, ICR shapes communication strategies for every key stakeholder audience, including business/financial, consumer, employees and third parties. It is when all of these parties have a unified view of the company and are sharing that understanding externally, that valuation has the opportunity to reach its full potential.

Learn more about ICR at [www.icrinc.com](http://www.icrinc.com)



**ICR** Redefining Strategic Communications

# Horde of lawyers chips away at freedoms

The legal assault on three Hampton towns by the East End Eruv Association, aided by Verizon, LPEG/LIPA and two huge law firms, is an example of lawyers running amok, robbing Americans of free speech and freedom of religion, as well as freedom from religion.

Founders of the country wanted to start with a fresh slate — barring the “seditious” libel that led to drawing and quartering of government critics in the U.K. and belief in anything supernatural, which spawned the Inquisition, among other abuses. The word “god” is not in the Constitution.

Under the U.K. system, Parliament had free speech but not the press or people. Offenders were tortured and executed for something they said. The modern Inquisition is the legal system where frivolous lawsuits can bankrupt a company or individual.

## Few trust U.S. court system

Anti-lawsuit sites such as Faces of Lawsuit Abuse say 87% of the public fears frivolous lawsuits. Only 16% trust the legal system to defend them against such suits, says a Harris poll. They cost Americans at least \$200 billion yearly.

Lawyers started to drag America back to the British system with the Sedition Act of 1798 that allowed Congress to penalize Americans for the “crime” of expressing “dissent.” Libel laws that could be used against the press and others were soon added.

New York Supreme Court Judge Charles Ramos argued in a 5,000 word article in the July 24, 1995 *New York Law Journal* that media should not be sued for libel because free speech was deterred. Half of PR execs polled by the O'Dwyer Co. agreed, including Howard Rubenstein, Richard Edelman, PRSA president John Beardsley, Robert Dilenschneider and Mark Ragan, of the Ragan Report.

The number of lawyers in the U.S. has now reached 1.22 million. They file 15 million civil lawsuits yearly — a far greater proportion of both than in any other country. Japan has 23 lawyers per 100,000 citizens, whereas the U.S. has 391 or 17 times as many. Canada has 26 lawyers per 100,000.

“The U.S. is choking on litigation ... anyone can sue for anything no matter how absurd or egregious,” wrote *Boston Globe* columnist Jeff Jacoby May 9, 2014.

## Eruv lawsuits are frivolous

One example of frivolous suits can be found in the multiple actions against Westhampton Beach, Southampton and Quogue, which are now in their fifth year and offer no end in sight. This has cost the affected towns and the grass roots organization Jewish People Opposed to the Eruv \$1 million so far in payments to law firms. The towns are threatened with millions in penalties and court costs.

Westhampton Beach has also been slammed as a result of the suits as anti-Semitic. A *New York Post* editorial on January 9 headlined “Making room for Jews” accused Westhampton Beach residents of “bigotry.”

The courts, unfortunately, have bowed to this kind of irrationality in some communities. The Federal District Court for Tenaflly, N.J., ordered an eruv in that city removed but this was overruled by an Appeals Court.

Despite the hundreds of thousands of words filed in this litigation, it's a no-brainer: Jewish Orthodox markings do not belong on utility poles any more than the sign of the cross or Muslim symbols.

For a sample of tortured logic and legal hair-splitting on what is or is not a sign, specious and fatuous reasoning and verbal overkill, readers should explore some of the more than 70 legal links on the Westhampton Beach website. What they will find is an almost bottomless swamp of verbiage in which they will quickly drown unless they have some life preservers of logic. That is the object of these massive legal actions — intimidate and discourage examination by citizens. Reporters, who ask a simple question and get “a roomful of information” are familiar with this ploy.

The job of the press and concerned citizens is to cut through this overgrown jungle and get to the heart of the matter. Both press and citizens have to mobilize public opinion. Vigorous public discussion, the bedrock of democracy, is needed. Lawyers, unfortunately, are often in the position of tamping down public discussion. ○

— Jack O'Dwyer

**O'Dwyer's**

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jack O'Dwyer  
jack@odwyerpr.com

## ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

John O'Dwyer  
john@odwyerpr.com

## ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Kevin McCauley  
kevin@odwyerpr.com

## EDITOR

Jon Gingerich  
jon@odwyerpr.com

## SENIOR EDITOR

Greg Hazley  
greg@odwyerpr.com

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Fraser Seitel  
Richard Goldstein

## EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS & RESEARCH

Chandler Klang Smith  
Caitlin Dullahan-Bates

## ADVERTISING SALES

Sharlene Spingler  
Associate Publisher & Editor  
sharlene@odwyerpr.com

John O'Dwyer  
Advertising Sales Manager  
john@odwyerpr.com

O'Dwyer's is published monthly for \$60.00 a year (\$7.00 fwwAve., New York, NY 10016. (212) 679-2471 Fax (212) 683-2750.

© Copyright 2015  
J.R. O'Dwyer Co., Inc.

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

### www.odwyerpr.com

Breaking news, commentary, useful databases and more.

### O'Dwyer's Newsletter

An eight-page weekly with general PR news, media appointments and placement opportunities.

### O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms

Listings of more than 1,300 PR firms throughout the U.S. and abroad.

### O'Dwyer's PR Buyer's Guide

Products and services for the PR industry in 50 categories.

### jobs.odwyerpr.com

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

THE FUTURE OF  
**PR**  
AND **SOCIAL**  
SOFTWARE  
**IS HERE**

CISION 

Read Cision CMO Mark Thabit's "**How Should Restaurants Approach Online Reviews?**" in this month's edition of O'Dwyer's.

**Call for Demo: 866-639-5087**

[www.cision.com](http://www.cision.com)



# Walmart reaps PR reward for employee wage hike

Walmart received positive PR for its recent decision to hike wages, but now the retailer faces a new challenge on the issue of gender pay equality.

By Greg Hazley and Kevin McCauley

Walmart made a splash with its fourth quarter earnings announcement in February, not in terms of revenue figures, but as the result of a vow to raise the pay of a half-million of its workers.

The retail colossus, which has been brushing off criticism of its low wages for years, said part-time staffers will earn at least \$9-per-hour, effective in April, while full-time workers will take home at least \$10-per-hour. Media coverage of the news has been global, pervasive and mostly positive.

The Bentonville, Arkansas retail giant, which reported \$13.6 billion in revenue for the fourth quarter of 2014, said it will spend one of those billions on the pay raises, training and education of its massive workforce. The company said operating income will be “pressured” from the “investments” it is making, but it knows that

shedding a reputation for underpaying, dead-end jobs will likely translate to sales down the road.

“We are trying to create a meritocracy where you can start somewhere and end up just as high as your hard work and your capacity will enable you to go,” CEO Doug McMillon told the AP. McMillon acknowledged in the earnings release that change is afoot. “We have work to do to grow the business,” he said. “We know what customers want from a shopping experience, and we’re investing strategically to exceed their expectations and better position Walmart for the future.”

In response to the news, Deutsche Bank analyst Paul Trussell told CNBC, “There’s been a lot of disgruntled workers, and frankly this does sound like the new CEO both of the U.S. Walmart team and Doug McMillon at the helm taking a step to perhaps correct those past evils.”

## Shareholders pressure for pay equity

Walmart meanwhile faces a challenge at its upcoming June annual meeting on gender pay equity, according to SEC documents.

Cynthia Murray, a Walmart worker, plans to sponsor a resolution calling for disclosure of hourly and wage breakdowns by gender.

That measure asks Walmart to disclose the proportion of men and women in each pay grade and range, along with the average hours worked at what rate.

Murray is concerned that Walmart, which is the No. 1 employer of females in the U.S., is creating a crisis for working women stuck with low wages and erratic scheduling. She’s a member of the OUR Walmart activist group that fights to improve worker pay and conditions at the retail giant.

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut said Walmart’s “low pay, involuntary part-time work and treatment of pregnant employees is harming working women and their families.”

The Democrat wants the company to treat women fairly by paying them a living wage and predictable and fair schedules so they can provide for their families. ○

*Fresh productions from farm to tablet.*

ARTISAN  
PRODUCTION HOUSE



SATELLITE TV JUNKETS  
BRANDED LIVE EVENTS  
FOOD & LIFESTYLE VIDEOS  
CELEBRITY TALENT/BRAND PARTNERSHIPS

*Artisan Production House is a full service production house specializing in food & lifestyle publicity*

Michael S. Bair | Photography

110 East 25th Street, Floor 2 New York, NY 10010 | [www.artisanproductionhouse.com](http://www.artisanproductionhouse.com)

## PR news brief

### Sard helps GNC in State supplement probe

Dietary supplement retailer GNC Holdings has brought in Sard Verbinen & Co. to help mount its PR defense against a probe by the New York attorney general into the ingredients of supplement products sold by major retailers.

NY AG Eric Schneidermann in February accused GNC, along with Target, Wal-Mart and Walgreens, of selling store brand supplements that could not be verified to contain labeled ingredients or that were found to contain ingredients not listed on product labels. He subpoenaed company records about the origins of ingredients in their supplements.

After an initial response Feb. 4 with its day-to-day PR firm MarketcomPR, Pittsburgh-based GNC, which is publicly traded, more forcefully refuted Schneidermann’s claims Feb. 9 with the help of Sard and a point-by-point rebuttal of the AG’s letter to the company. The company said it has pulled a small number of affected products from New York stores as it waits to hear a response to their challenge from Schneidermann.

GNC CEO Michael Arcbold said all of the company’s products are submitted to “rigorous and generally accepted testing before they reach of our customers.” GNC, along with others in the supplement industry, are challenging the DNA barcoding test method relied on by the attorney general as unreliable. GNC said it and has sent the AG results of their own testing.

Sard Verbinen Managing Directors Bryan Locke in Chicago and Bob Rendine in New York are guiding GNC’s PR response.



# New dietary recommendations stir controversy

The Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's recommendations for nutrition have sparked controversy for pushing policy over science, and experts now wonder what impact these proposed changes could have on national food policy.

By Jon Gingerich

The Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee released its latest recommendations in February. Those recommendations, issued every five years, are the work of a 14-member advisory committee of nutrition experts charged with reviewing current scientific evidence that characterizes a safe, healthy diet. The panel's suggestions influence official federal guidelines for nutrition policy in food assistance programs and school lunches, as well as the USDA's MyPlate program.

Some of the suggestions made in the 570-page report seemed obvious: the panel recommended eating more vegetables, fruits and whole grains, and suggested cutting back on salt and saturated fat, as well as added sugars in food and drinks.

Other recommendations were surprising. Up to 400 milligrams of caffeine a day — somewhere between three and five cups of coffee — is now considered safe. Decades-long concerns on cholesterol intake also appear to have been toned down, as science now shows cholesterol in the blood isn't the result of cholesterol from foods.

In other ways, however, the 2015 DGAC report was historic, in terms of its breadth of scope in addressing topics never previously broached by the committee, as well as new recommendations some experts say contradict scientific evidence.

Probably the most controversial recommendation in the report surrounds the DGAC's stance on current consumption levels of meat — red meat, processed meat, even lean meats — recommending Americans cut down on all meats as part of a healthy diet.

Bill Layden, Partner and Co-Founder of FoodMinds, LLC, said there is currently no scientific evidence backing the notion that consumers should eat less meat than what is currently being consumed.

"It's clear that there appears to have been an effort by committee members to isolate meat, and their recommendation in the report was not substantiated by dietary trails or studies," he said. "There is substantial science that supports including lean meat and red meat in a healthy diet, and the recommendation for consumers to eat less lean meat does not seem to be justified."

Since the report's release, some politicians and industry groups have expressed to the media that the latest DGAC recommendations have surpassed their intended purpose of discussing nutrition and diet, and have veered into debates of policy.

For the first time, the DGAC recommendations honed in on sustainability concerns, suggesting Americans adopt eating habits that reduce harm to the environment. The DGAC report also suggested higher taxes on sugary foods and drinks to "support health promotion efforts."

"Without a doubt, the committee chose to go well beyond what people perceive is its charter and into a realm that includes policy recommendations, where it does not possess any expertise," Layden said.

Of course, recommendations in the committee's report are just that: recommenda-

tions; they have no immediate bearing on public policy. However, these suggestions are taken into consideration by the Department of Health and Human Services and the USDA, which will issue its official guidelines later in the year. Layden said there is a strong likelihood that these recommendations will have a "major impact" on food assistance and food nutrition programs for the next five years.

"One would imagine that some of the recommendations would carry through to the actual policy document, and that potentially does mean less ground beef in the school food program," he said.

Layden mentioned, however, that this development also presents an opportunity.

"To some extent, a report like this helps marketers: it gives us an opportunity to explain to consumers the value of foods and how they fit into overall healthy diet patterns," he said. "This controversy provides an opportunity for markets to do what they do best." ○

## CO-OPS FOR 2015

• Best Stations • Best Fees • Best Talent

*"...2015 Media Tour Schedule... 60 Co-Op Themes"*

**Bob Thomas Productions, Inc**

**(212) 221-8000**

Email: [bobthomas@bobthomas.net](mailto:bobthomas@bobthomas.net)

Demos: [www.bobthomasproductions.com](http://www.bobthomasproductions.com)

# New supplement regulations confuse consumers

**Dietary supplements have come under fire from state agencies, raising questions about what role they play in healthcare. PR pros now have a duty to participate in this conversation, to alleviate any potential confusion and help health-conscious consumers make informed decisions.**

By Arielle Bernstein

**W**ith patients and consumers increasingly empowered and engaged in their own healthcare, dietary supplements have gained in popularity and importance. Easy-to-access capsules and tablets help consumers ensure they're getting the vitamins, minerals and fatty acids that may be missing from their diets.

Yet recently, dietary supplements have come under scrutiny from multiple sources. As it turns out, confusion is common among consumers, as well as the healthcare professionals charged with guiding their wellbeing.

As PR professionals seeking to guard client reputation and improve public health, it's critical for us to understand the facts about dietary supplements, their intended use, and their potential safety concerns.

Confusion is practically a given in this category. In fact, a few years ago, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Beneficiaries Services almost nixed reimbursement coverage for seniors needing a prescription heart medication because it contained a vitamin. After months of discussion, the drug was included for patients in need — but the risk of exclusion was very real.

## What's in a name?

Dietary supplements are intended to do just what their name suggests — supplement diet. In fact, under United States law known as the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994, these products are regulated as foods, not drugs (the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is clear that dietary supplements should not be used to treat diagnosed disease.). While this seems straightforward, their location in the drug-store may be contributing to confusion about their nature and appropriate use. Both healthcare professionals and patients may be mistakenly calling dietary supplements “over the counter” products — an entirely different FDA-supervised regulatory category.

Unlike dietary supplements, OTCs are tightly regulated by FDA as drugs; tested for safety, efficacy and good manufacturing processes. Calling a dietary supplement an “OTC” product is misleading to consumers. Yet healthcare professionals tend to use the two terms interchangeably, adding to the

confusion. Data released from a survey of 150 pharmacists and 200 physicians, conducted by Farleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind, showed that fewer than half (41%) of the professionals surveyed correctly stated that FDA regulates and approves OTC products, but not dietary supplement products. This is more than just an issue of semantics — confusion around terminology may add to consumer misunderstanding about how to use dietary supplements appropriately. Creating clarity is especially important in light of recent safety concerns.

## Supplement scrutiny creates confusion

During recent weeks, dietary supplements have come under scrutiny — perhaps most notably and publicly, from the New York Attorney General, whose office announced a lawsuit against four major national drug store chains for selling dietary supplements that are mislabeled and contain undisclosed fillers and allergens. For PR firms in this category, helping dietary supplement clients and pharmacy chains requires knowledge and asking the right questions. In light of the NYAG announcement, the U.S. Government Accountability Office reissued its 2010 report on herbal dietary supplements, revealing that 37 of 40 supplements tested contained a hazardous contaminant.

The supplements evaluated and listed in the NYAG lawsuit were popular herbal supplements, such as St. John's Wort and ginkgo biloba. But questions of safety and labeling extend to other popular dietary supplements like fish oil capsules. Fish oil, or omega-3 fatty acids, is among the most popular dietary supplements in the world. People spend around \$3.1 billion annually on omega-3 supplements, and market research indicates that retail sales of omega-3s will increase 37% by 2016.

Clinical research links omega-3 to potential heart health benefits, among other things, but the clinical studies involved prescription products, not dietary supplements. And while they may share an active ingredient, dietary supplement fish oil is not monitored in the same way as prescriptions — and new evidence reveals potential health risks.

A study on fish oil supplements published in *Nature* journal in January, found that 69% of the fish oil supplements studied

contained less than two-thirds of the active ingredients listed on their label. More concerning, the study team found high levels of oxidation — essentially, the breakdown of the active oils, which degenerate and may have health implications. From a quality perspective, only 8% of tested samples met international standards.

Even if consumers find a fish oil supplement that is labeled accurately, the fact remains that dietary supplements are not intended to treat serious medical conditions. Often, dietary supplements do not contain therapeutic doses equal to prescription products.

Unfortunately, confusion plays a role in impeding patient care here, too: the PublicMind survey also found that 30% of pharmacists and 22% of physicians stated, incorrectly, that prescription and dietary supplement omega-3 products are similar in strength and content. For patients seeking therapeutic doses of omega-3 fatty acids to treat a disease, being directed to a dietary supplement instead of a prescription can actually cause more harm than good. Without clear information for both patients and professionals, consumers may be using products that are not only less than prescription strength, but may contain unlisted ingredients.

Healthcare PR carries a special responsibility and privilege: our work on behalf of innovators, marketers, patient advocates, professionals and health systems as a whole is linked directly to patient outcomes. Seeking to understand the detail behind patient behaviors and the context around health risks is what drives us, and what enables us to develop thoughtful messaging and outreach strategies. In the case of dietary supplements, confusion and inconsistent use of terminology is obstructing care; as a result, people who might benefit from dietary supplements or prescription medicines don't realize these products' full health benefits. PR practitioners have the opportunity to disseminate communications that make a tangible difference in patient care. Hopefully, increased knowledge will ensure patients can access safe, effective dietary supplements in the course of aiding their health.

Arielle Bernstein is Group Vice President of Health at Makovsky. ●



Arielle Bernstein





# HEALTH IS WHO WE ARE

What is health? It's what's on your plate, it's what's filling your glass, it's how we measure the way we feel. Today, health is the lens through which consumers view brands. As the definition of health expands, so too must the communications expertise on which you rely.

**Health may be a new focus in your world.  
Fortunately, it's always been at the center of ours.**

Contact us to find your new point of view.  
[info@allidura.com](mailto:info@allidura.com)



**Download your free copy:**

"Millennial Mindset:  
The Worried Well" at  
[www.allidura.com/millennialhealth](http://www.allidura.com/millennialhealth).

This in-depth report  
unveils Millennials' quest to  
redefine the meaning  
of happiness & health.

# Is misinformation feeding America's obesity epidemic?

**Recent nutrition survey data shows today's consumers want to make positive health changes, but are bombarded with diet fads and conflicting sources of information, which ultimately leave them confused and make the adoption of lifestyle changes difficult.**

By Louise M. Pollock

**C**onsumers are becoming more aware of the serious weight problem in the United States, but several factors are hindering improvement according to the 2015 "What's Trending in Nutrition" survey conducted by Pollock Communications, and the nutrition trade magazine, *Today's Dietitian*. Here's what food manufacturers need to know.

Obesity awareness is rising in the U.S. Healthcare professionals, lawmakers and the media openly and frequently discuss the issue of obesity and what can be done to curb its growing rates in the U.S., along with the myriad health ailments that it causes, including heart disease and diabetes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), obesity is common, serious and costly:

- More than one-third (34.9% or 78.6 million) of U.S. adults are obese.
- Obesity-related conditions include heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer, some of the leading causes of preventable death.
- The estimated annual medical cost of obesity in the U.S. was \$147 billion in 2008 U.S. dollars; the medical costs for people who are obese were \$1,429 higher than those of normal weight.

According to the annual survey of 500 registered dietitians, however, a majority of consumers have not grown complacent. In fact, the survey revealed that 70% of dietitians believe consumers will be more interested in nutrition and weight loss in 2015 than they were in 2014. In addition, 44% of dietitians last year felt that more Americans were becoming comfortable with the idea of being at an unhealthy weight, but this year's survey reveals that only 26% of dietitians feel the same way, indicating a turn in the tide. More consumers want to take action to lead healthier lifestyles. This, of course, is good news, but the survey also revealed several hidden obstacles that consumers face in the battle against the bulge.

Below are several factors that could be fueling the weight problem in America:

## **A proliferation of misinformation**

Blogs dish about nutrition, but can't al-

ways be trusted. Many nutrition experts (42%) agree that consumers are getting their health and nutrition information from blogs and websites. Nearly 40% also agree that consumers receive the most misinformation from blogs and websites, and they predict that there will be more nutrition misinformation available in 2015. More than 90% believe the mass quantity of nutrition information and misinformation is more likely to lead to consumer confusion and lack of diet improvement.

## **Adoption of fads over healthy lifestyles**

Gluten-free diets dominate the weight loss fads of the moment, but eliminating gluten will not eliminate obesity. According to the experts, 66% believe gluten-free or wheat-free diets will continue to be trendy in 2015.

"Cutting out wheat or avoiding gluten may not promote weight loss or improve health independently, but choosing foods that are 'free' of certain ingredients or nutrients remains popular among consumers," said Jenna Bell, Senior Vice President and Director of Food & Wellness at Pollock Communications.

Dietitians also noted that we will see "clean eating" and the Paleo diet, as popular eating trends, but 51% of nutrition experts say that choosing high-quality, nutrient-rich foods in all food groups, is the best diet advice to follow. It boils down to making the right food and lifestyle choices, rather than following the diet fads.

## **Confusion over the right choices**

While low-carb diets remain strong, low-fat diets are fading. For another consecutive year, the overwhelming majority of dietitians predict that the low-fat diet will fall flat in 2015, with only 4% naming it as a popular eating trend among consumers. As consumers welcome fat back into their eating plans, the question becomes: which fats are best? In the battle of the fats, 84% of nutrition experts agree that consumers should replace saturated fat with good fats (mono- and polyunsaturated fatty acids). While scientists continue to explore the impact of different types of dietary fats and their food sources, very low- or no-fat eating is definitely out.

"Dietitians recommend a balanced

diet that includes sources of fat and a pattern that aligns with current national guidelines for reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease," said Bell.

Speaking of saturated fat, it needs to be taken into consideration when choosing proteins to include in a healthy diet. The survey revealed consumer confusion about high-quality proteins. According to dietitians, most consumers view animal-based protein, such as meat, fish and poultry, as high-quality, but nutrition pros rank them differently, recommending (in order) fish and seafood, eggs, legumes and nuts, poultry and dairy as healthy, high-quality proteins, followed by soy. Red meat is considered less healthy among the nutrition pros, most likely due to the saturated fat, cholesterol and high environmental demands required to produce beef. With consumer confusion comes poor choices.

## **Unrealistic, unhealthy comparisons**

How do consumers gauge their health and weight? By comparing themselves to friends and family, say 35% of dietitians, while 30% say that consumers use people in magazines or on television as their basis for health and weight comparisons. Obviously, this sets the consumer up for failure. Either they mistake unhealthy weights as the norm or set unreachable goals for themselves. These pitfalls are part of the hidden triggers that sabotage good intentions.

## **Disconnect between wants and needs**

According to the experts, consumers are looking for more eco-labels in 2015, with 69% of experts saying that GMO-free labels are most important to their clients. Dietitians predict that GMO-free, gluten-free, clean eating/clean ingredient list and organic will have more of an impact on consumer choices in the coming year. However, while there will be new food and nutrition trends — or "consumer wants" — in 2015, the survey revealed that shoppers' choices are ultimately dictated by three basic needs — convenience, taste and price. There are some things shoppers just won't sacrifice, regardless of what's trendy.

Louise M. Pollock is President of Pollock Communications. ●



Louise M. Pollock



Boldly transforming the way  
the world thinks about food,  
nutrition and health, to help  
our clients tell a better story.



foodminds

[foodminds.com](https://foodminds.com)

# How should restaurants approach online reviews?

Unflattering online reviews can be a nuisance for restaurants. However, learning how to address customer comments via social media can often turn a negative into a net positive.

By Mark Thabit

Every story has two sides. Last summer, an anonymous restaurant owner took to the Internet to defend his restaurant against complaints of slow service.

The time customers spend at tables has nearly doubled since 2004 — to an hour and 55 minutes — but using security video footage, the restaurateur surmised the issue stemmed from diners dawdling on mobile devices and taking pictures of food. The viral menu-festo concluded with a request for diners to be “a bit more considerate.”

The frustration is understandable; any diner can now have the influence of a *New York Times* food critic. However, online reviews also provide those in the restaurant business an unprecedented opportunity to expand their reach, drive awareness and attract more diners. Here’s how our social, mobile world can be a boon to businesses.

## Leverage social content

Posting photos about a dining experience is far from universal. Only 13% of people who have dined out and use social media have posted a food or drink picture in the past month. Still, that’s equal to 29.2 million people, according to a recent survey by Mintel.

When reviewing a restaurant, diners aren’t solely interested in pointing forks at disappointing experiences. Fourteen percent of diners have left a positive review on a restaurant’s social media page.

What’s that worth? Positive reviews influence nearly one in five diners to eat somewhere. That may not sound like a lot, but the impact of these reviews requires minimal investment by the restaurants. One Florida restaurant believes that positive reviews hold so much value that they allowed patrons to pay for meals by posting pictures and comments to Instagram.

Unsatisfied customers will always exist, mistakes happen and sometimes diners have unrealistic expectations. While no complaint should go ignored, the more important ones may occur online. If someone complains in person, only the people in the dining room will know about it. An online complaint on your social media property or a review site lasts forever and has a limitless audience.

When facing a negative review or frustrated customer, stay calm, explain your side without being defensive, and offer to make it right. If you’re part of a franchise and a

customer vents about an issue at another location, consider responding if that franchise ignores or takes its time responding. The same strategy can work to win diners from competitors.

Responding and addressing a negative review can turn it into a net positive and create a brand advocate.

“There’s a growing body of evidence that shows great service recovery actually converts customers into more loyal and profitable ones,” wrote Denise Lee Yohn in *QSR Magazine*. “So a negative review represents a brand-building opportunity.”

## Let diners work for you

In an attempt to capitalize on this new era of socially shared dining experiences, some restaurants have sacrificed flavor for better presentation.

“A snapshot of a new dish uploaded last night can cause a bump in reservations this afternoon,” wrote Pete Wells, restaurant critic for *The New York Times*. “Chefs who serve camera-ready plates find their dining rooms full of volunteer publicists, who work for free and leave money on the table when they go home.”

Though it’s not wise to serve an inferior product, as Wells said he has experienced, balancing deliciousness and eye candy is probably your best bet. Though beautiful food is a great way to get people to create content on your behalf, staying true to your brand also works. Known for its ribs, Tony Roma’s launched its #TRSauciestCouple campaign for Valentine’s Day. The restaurant encouraged couples to get messy eating ribs and share pictures of the aftermath on Instagram.

Providing people financial incentives to post content can work, too. Research by Mintel suggests that combining technology and a loyalty program might be the best course of action. Nearly 70% of respondents said they preferred loyalty programs that provided points toward future transactions.

## React to trends

Online reviews are free data. Considering most diners post infrequently, you can safely assume that what they do critique is important. This information gives you the opportunity to create a better customer experience, reduce bad reviews and increase good ones.

Even if your restaurant hasn’t yet generated much social chatter, it doesn’t mean that

valuable information isn’t available. Tony Roma’s tweaked its offerings after mining competitors’ social media coverage, says Jay Winborne the restaurant’s communications manager. To generate awareness, they tied the recipe tweak to a social campaign called Crave the Kick.

“You see what people are talking about, what’s in,” Winborne said. “For a while everyone wanted to put kale in everything. Recently, we’ve taken a couple of our classic dishes and added a zestiness, a spiciness, so it has a kick.”

Social media’s ability to uncover insights about customers and food has increased the speed in which tastes spread and forces restaurants to become more flexible.

“New ideas and techniques zoom around the world with head-spinning speed,” Wells wrote. “It took years for nouvelle cuisine to book passage across the Atlantic. After Dominique Ansel unveiled his doughnut-croissant hybrid, the Cronut, last May, it took less than two weeks for a copycat to appear in Melbourne, Australia.”

Restaurants that have removed anonymous posts, or have banned cameras from the dining room — a fruitless endeavor considering most everything has a camera these days — should instead embrace this new reality. Sharing about food isn’t a fad — it’s part of human nature.

“Sharing food has always been a social ritual, and sharing photos of that food can serve as an extension of this, especially when loved ones are absent,” said Nathalie Nahai, a Web psychologist.

Restaurants have little to fear in our new social and mobile world. The threat of social media doesn’t come close to matching its opportunities. The challenge is finding insights among millions of posts. Social media monitoring software can mine only what’s relevant, whether you choose to look at posts from certain geographical locations or mentions of specific cuisines.

Instead of seeing patrons as diners preoccupied by their mobile devices, imagine a dining room full of marketers, PR pros and product innovators. Restaurants need to accept and leverage this social world even if diners don’t necessarily realize that their mobile habits are to blame for longer stays at restaurants.

Mark Thabit is CMO of Cision. ○



Mark Thabit



# “Luck is not a business model.”

- Anthony Bourdain

DON'T LEAVE YOUR BRAND'S REPUTATION TO CHANCE.



Dunkin' Donuts, America's favorite all-day, everyday stop for coffee and baked goods, has earned the #1 ranking for customer loyalty in the coffee category by Brand Keys for eight years running.



In just a few years, Talenti Gelato & Sorbetto has become the best-selling gelato in the U.S., setting the highest standards of quality and taste for any gelato or premium ice-cream maker in the country.



German Riesling has gone from niche to "it" wine, bringing a younger audience into the fold and dispelling the myth that Riesling is just a sweet wine.



The Truvia® brand has transformed the U.S. sweetener market by opening the category of natural zero-calorie sweetness. Today, Truvia® natural sweetener is the country's #2 sugar substitute.

IDEAS MATTER. WORDS MATTER. IMPACT MATTERS.

**RF | BINDER**

950 Third Avenue, 7th Floor New York, NY 10022 amy.binder@rfbinder.com 212.994.7501

# New challenges from the top of the food chain

**Call it a Dickensian paradox: food today is experiencing both the best and worst of times. Never in history have so many people been able to consume so much, while simultaneously remaining unsatisfied and, in many cases, being genuinely malnourished.**

By Bill Layden

**W**hile global life expectancy continues to improve, dietary factors are the number-one cause of non-communicable diseases and premature death in all parts of the world except for Oceania and sub-Saharan Africa.

Yet, we're also presently living through a grand transformation, as civilization consciously awakens to the realization that food is more than self-serving sustenance; it's a connection that binds humanity together with nature and the spirit that emerges in the harmonic balance of both. No other mammals are wrestling with the trade-offs involved in converting sunlight to energy to tasty morsels for pleasure, for nourishment, or for living. The cheetah doesn't care about affordability, accessibility, water usage, carbon footprints, fair trade, food safety, antibiotics, genetically modified organisms, artificial colors or sweeteners, ambient air quality, labor, animal welfare, or frankly, family members when it brings down the gazelle. The cheetah only knows survival. For humans, we have, thankfully, emerged above this level of existence and indeed find that it's lonely at the top of the food chain.

## **Food awareness on the rise**

The U.S. is beginning to catch up with other parts of the world that have been questioning the authenticity of our food, the way it's produced, the people and technology that produce it, the way we eat it, the hidden consequences of producing it, and the alternatives that may challenge existing economic structures. In November 2014, Mark Bittman, an American food journalist and columnist for *The New York Times*, and others called for a national food policy to reform the food system in the United States.

In January 2015, the Institute of Medicine published a report entitled, "A Framework for Assessing the Effects of the Food System," a thoughtful systems-based approach for evaluating the health, environmental, social and economic aspects of the food system. The report found, in part, that creating policies to change the food system require a lot of analysis and evaluations because of the "trade-offs embedded in current agricultural and food

system practices." In short, the food system is extremely complex and changing it to be better for humans, for the planet and for humanity will be challenging. It is imperative we understand that if we are going to change the food system, that we do so thoughtfully with an eye towards minimizing unintended consequences and providing for all — not just the food police or the food elites.

## **The evolving role of sustainability**

The 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) released its report in February, and for the first time considered sustainability as part of advising the federal government on what to recommend to consumers for a healthy diet. The DGAC report and recommendations, especially its policy recommendations, met immediately with a chorus of objections and strong criticisms. In fact, in an unprecedented move, the former members of the DGAC (its charter expired on February 19, 2015) convened at Harvard University to explain and defend its approach and recommendations.

The biggest hurdle in addressing some of these issues is that humans didn't consciously create a food system to meet our newly awakened expectations. Traditionally, we have thought about the components of the food system in silos — individual issues around nutrition, safety, quality, affordability, access, and use. For example, food and nutrition scientists rarely communicated with each other, let alone with experts in culinary arts, energetics or environmental sciences. Even within companies, disciplines were organizationally divided and integration rare.

Today, however, we are evolving our understanding of the impact our food system has on people and the planet. We've begun to understand that our food system is extraordinarily complex and have started to think about conducting a multi-factorial assessment of our food system.

Is it possible to measure and evaluate multiple trade-offs in food and food production, such as human health effects, sustainability, and affordability? What food system should we design to optimize the multiple values we are placing on food?

While organizations around the globe are working to answer these types of questions, we know that consumers, especially Millennials with young children, are demanding more from their food and the people and organizations that produce it for them. In short, they want to know the whole story.

## **A post-science foundation of food rules**

Understanding these complex challenges and charting the future will require skilled individuals to help explain, educate, engage and entertain the population. It will require working together throughout all steps of the food chain, from appreciating farmers and production practices to recognizing the challenges of bringing affordable, nutritious food to the table to feed a growing population globally and help everyone achieve optimal health.

It is clear that we are moving from a strictly "science-based" foundation of the rules of food to a "principles-based" foundation. Yes, science will continue to be a core element, but it may not be the only element as civilization wrestles with the values assigned to different variables in a complex equation of multiple options and choices.

The future is ours to envision, redesign, reconstruct and improve, but change won't come overnight — it will take courage, leadership, patience and perseverance. While it may not be easy at the top of the food chain, humans need to try to change because it is the responsible thing to do. In the words of Lyle Lovett, "But what would you be if you didn't even try. You have to try. So after a lot of thought. I'd like to reconsider. Please, if it's not too late. Make it a cheeseburger."

The stories of our food are becoming more vivid, more vibrant and more vociferous, and storytellers around the globe are helping to shape how we think about food — how we talk about it, how we visualize it, how we relate to it, and ultimately, how we will value it in the future.

*Bill Layden is Partner and Co-Founder of FoodMinds, LLC. ○*



Bill Layden



# OMC, Publicis, IPG post solid fourth-quarter gains

Omnicom, Publicis Groupe and Interpublic reported strong gains for end-of-year earnings in 2014, sparked by surges in organic growth. They expect the momentum they experienced in 2014 will carry into 2015 as the global economy picks up steam.

By Greg Hazley and Kevin McCauley

**F**TI Strategic, meanwhile, expects to rebound from “disappointing” Q4 results, while MDC Partners shaves loss and anticipates a bright future.

## OMC PR Revs Up 8%

Omnicom’s PR operations soared eight percent to \$368.1 million in the fourth quarter of 2014, an 8.5% organic climb across units like Ketchum, FleishmanHillard, Porter Novelli and Brodeur.

OMC’s Q4 revenues companywide, which beat Wall Street forecasts, rose 3.4% to \$4.2 billion, including an 8.8% jump in the US to \$2.2 billion that offset a 2.2% decline in the rest of the world to just under \$2 billion. Net income rose 9.7% to \$329.5 million.

In the fourth quarter, PR’s gains outpaced advertising (+5.1% to \$2.1 billion) and CRM (-1.3% to \$1.4 billion).

For 2014, PR revenues were up 5% (4.1% organically) to \$1.4 billion.

OMC revenues for the full year were up 5% to \$15.3 billion and up 7.7% in the US. Net income rose 11.4% to top \$1.1 billion.

Debt rose to nearly \$4.6 billion in 2014 from \$4 billion a year earlier, against \$2.4 billion in cash and short-term investments. It spent \$227.6 million on acquisitions in 2014, including \$83.2 million paid in earn-outs on deals made after 2008.

## Publicis builds on momentum

Publicis Groupe reported an 11.5% rise in Q4 revenues to \$2.4 billion, wrapping up what CEO Maurice Levy called an “eventful year” marked by the May collapse of the \$35 billion merger with Omnicom and the \$3.7 billion acquisition of Boston’s Sapien announced in November. Full year revenue advanced 4.3% to \$8.3 billion.

Organic growth rose 3.2% for the final quarter compared to 2% for the entire year.

Levy attributed the weak level of full year organic growth due to a poor performance in Europe, temporary problems at Razorfish in the U.S. and U.K. and a “slight tailing off of performance at MSLGroup.

The 2015 focus is on development of Publicis’ digital offerings. Digital is expected to account for 50% of overall revenues, up from 42% at end of the 2014.

Levy wants Publicis to become the “only group capable of helping our clients transform themselves through our combination

of consulting and technology, strategy and creativity, digital capability and know-how in multichannel commerce.”

Publicis expects the market will strengthen during the year, most notably during the second half.

## IPG’s Q4 net surges 56%

Interpublic reported a 56% rise in Q4 net income to \$331 million on a four percent uptick in revenues to \$2.2 billion.

Organic growth advanced 4.8%, sparked by a 6.4% jump overseas compared to 3.4% in the US.

CEO Michael Roth said IPG’s ability to deliver customized integration services to clients resulted in solid gains and new business momentum.

He said the “tone of business is solid” for 2015, though there is uncertainty about currently fluctuations and the European market.

The ad/combine’s constituency management group, which includes PR firms such as Weber Shandwick, Golin, Cassidy & Assocs. and DeVries Global, reported a three percent hike in Q4 growth to \$386 million with organic up 0.6%, down from 5.8 percent to \$1.4 billion for the year.

WS Chief Andy Polansky reported double-digital growth as clients took advantage of its social/digital and content marketing expertise.

Healthcare, consumer, financial, Brazil, China and major U.S. offices (New York, Chicago) were standout performers. Polansky anticipates the firm will continue to thrive in 2015 boosted by its 2014 momentum.

IPG is targeting three to four percent organic growth for the full year

The firm’s healthcare, tech & telecom and auto/transportation businesses were its biggest client sectors in 2014, each accounting for 18% of revenue from its top 100 clients

During Q4, IPG hammered out a “standstill agreement” with activist investor Elliott Management, owner of 6.9% of its outstanding stock.

The deal calls for the nomination of three independent directors, who were evaluated and acceptable to both IPG and Elliott, and the formation of a finance committee.

Two long-term directors Jill Considine

and Richard Goldstein resigned from the board on March 1. New Directors to the now 10-member board are Jon Miller, former Chief at both AOL and News Corp’s digital operation; Deborah Ellinger, ex-CEO of *The Princeton Review*/Wellness Pet Food and President of Restoration Hardware, and Henry Miller, chairman of Marlegate Asset Management.

Jesse Cohn, head of U.S. Equity Activism at Elliott, said his firm is “pleased with the constructive dialog” it’s had with IPG, which “has shown a impressive commitment to enhancing shareholder value.” Elliott looks forward to “ongoing collaboration with IPG’s management and board,” according to Cohn.

The firm has agreed to support all directors nominated to the board at IPG’s 2015 annual meeting.

## FTI Strategic slips

FTI Consulting reported Q4 strategic communications revenue fell 1.2% to \$46.3 million as president/CEO Steven Gunby expressed “disappointment” for the period.

FTI said currency fluctuations put its communications operation in the red as revenues would have increased 1.7% on a project-related success fee if currency effects are excluded.

Across the company, revenues rose 2.2% to \$452.2 million for the quarter. Net income swung positive to \$921 million after a loss in Q4 2013.

For the year, FTI’s Strategic Communications operation saw a 1.7% uptick in revenues to \$189.4 million. FTI has 566 staffers in its PR operation. Full-year revenues across FTI climbed 6.3% to \$1.76 billion.

“Notwithstanding our disappointment in the fourth quarter, we are making solid progress towards getting to where we need to be to meet the 2015 and 2016 targets we have outlined,” said Gunby.

## MDC eyes bright future

MDC Partners posted Q4 revenue increase of 17.5% to \$339.9 million as net loss dropped more than \$67 million to \$26.8 million.

The New York-based ad/PR combine, parent to Hunter PR, Sloane & Co., Kwitken + Co. and Allison + Partners, saw organic growth jump 10.8% for the year on revenue of \$1.22 billion, up 15.2%.

CEO Miles Nadal said the business “performed very well” as evidenced by strong organic growth, cash generation and agency performance. ○

# What the facts say about Millennials and nutrition

A recent study of Millennials has revealed some telling details about this coveted demographic's perspectives on health, diet, nutrition and well-being, and how an emphasis on concepts like mindfulness and authenticity affect food and beverage brands.

By Rose Anna Kaczmarcik

Linking the words “healthy, wealthy and wise” goes back at least as far as John Clarke’s 1639 collection of English and Latin proverbs. But few members of today’s self-aware Millennial generation would submit to the proverb’s rhyming formula, “early to bed and early to rise.” In fact, Millennials in general are loath to follow any formulas. Their approach to health, wealth and wisdom? Being mindful, treating other people well and eating the right foods.

I put an emphasis on “mindful” because the term may prove to be one of the most potent approaches to PR and marketing of our time. For Millennials, mindfulness evokes meditation and yoga-inspired “mind-body” techniques that might just help them in their quest to achieve both health and happiness.

## Mindful movement

“Mindfulness” certainly wasn’t a buzzword during the Europe of John Clarke’s day. Nor was it a significant trend when boomers were coming of age. But today, if your business involves marketing to Millennials or understanding their worldview, it’s a concept and, indeed, a movement, deserving close examination. Millennials, myself included, are embracing companies that bring this concept to life — from clothing (Spiritual Gangster) to work-outs (SoulCycle) and beyond.

A survey conducted by Allidura Consumer, GSW and Harris Poll throughout May and June analyzed the health and well-being attitudes of 3,500 Millennials, Gen Xers and Baby Boomers. The findings reaffirmed the importance of the mind-body connection among Millennials. Almost all — 97% — of Millennials named happiness as a primary interest. An equally large number — 95% — said they cared deeply about their health. More than a third of Millennials — 35% — also said seeing a therapist regularly is important to a healthy lifestyle, meaning they see physical well-being as hinging on mental balance. Among older Gen X and Boomer responders, only 12% and 24%, respectively, expressed a need to connect mind and body health in this way.

Millennials are also thinking of health

in broader terms than going to the doctor, something they see as “sick care.” Instead, they see foods and drinks as key elements to overall health. Food and beverage companies are beginning to hone in on the concept of mindfulness within their corporate structures and marketing plans, which is especially salient, given eating and drinking are so closely tied to both gratification and health.

## Conscious capitalism

It’s no wonder companies are now embracing this concept; a growing cohort of business gurus has described mindfulness as the key to innovation, collaboration and even a new economic system called “conscious capitalism.” Corporations ranging from Google to General Mills to Green Mountain Coffee have set up programs employing mindfulness meditation to improve employee focus, lift moods and reduce stress — no doubt a draw for millennial applicants.

Consider the example of Mondelēz International, maker of Triscuit crackers, Cadbury chocolate and Oreos. The company introduced the idea of “mindful snacking,” as part of its overall well-being platform. Among other agendas, the goal is to present clear nutrition information and provide “portion control options” aimed at “helping [consumers] make better decisions when it comes to their well-being.”

## Authenticity required

To inoculate against seeming disingenuous, companies embracing the mindful mantra must borrow from another mindset resonating with today’s millennial consumer — authenticity. Incorporating mindfulness in ways that resonate true to their consumers, products and cause-related efforts is key. Similar to how fashion designer Donna Karan, a forebearer of mindful business practices, launched the Urban Zen Foundation, which, among other things, created a holistic community to preserve Haiti’s unique culture, work with artisans and present their work to the western world.

Mondelēz supports its mindful snacking and well-being platform by linking the company’s growth strategy with social ini-

tiatives where it can make an impact. These initiatives resonate with young consumers. For example, the company explains how its mindful snacking goals are based on improving the nutrition of its products and supports farming communities where they source ingredients. They report candidly on successes and challenges with these initiatives.

## A new age of awareness

Chipotle and Panera Bread have likewise tied their experiments in mindful business practice to rock-solid commitments in social responsibility, which are authentically tied to their overall business plans. While they may not use the term mindful, their efforts communicate the conscious awareness the term invokes. In many venues, on many occasions, Chipotle CEO Steve Ells has promised to source food locally using only sustainably-raised ingredients. The franchise has stayed true to its mission and earned a steadfast clientele.

In 2011, Panera Founder and co-CEO Ron Shaich published an article in *The Harvard Business Review* heralding a new age in which corporations would take “a conscious and long-term approach to value creation.” In Panera’s case, he was talking about a non-profit, pay-what-you-can version of the usual Panera bakery aimed at communities grappling with food insecurity. These so-called Panera Cares cafes would have the same menus as the usual Panera bakeries and be indistinguishable in design, décor and service.

While some Buddhist leaders say achieving a mindful state takes a lifetime of practice, many secular Western teachers say a few minutes of daily meditation can make all the difference. Food and beverage companies are right to embrace the mindful movement for the long-haul to reach Millennials. The challenge is to embed it in marketing and business practices that resonate authentically, an exercise that may be best achieved with a little reflection or mindful meditation.

Rose Anna Kaczmarcik is a Team Leader at Allidura Consumer. ○



Rose Anna Kaczmarcik



# Soda alternatives gaining followers, market share

In recent years, consumers have become distinctly savvy regarding products that adversely affect their health. With statistics showing that some consumers often drink up to 1,200 calories per day in soda alone, an increased awareness into the negative consequences of sugary drinks has arisen. This has created an opportunity for alternative markets whose presence is now becoming increasingly visible on grocery shelves.

By Erika Kauffman

**S**oda alternatives, including smaller all-natural and organic brands that deliver the same refreshing taste as high-fructose sodas but without the additives, are becoming more prevalent within the beverage industry. In restaurants, grocery stores and beyond, these companies have been taking shelf space from huge corporations, like Coca Cola and Pepsi. This can be attributed to both greater consumer awareness of health concerns and savvy marketing campaigns; consumers no longer crave the sickly sugary drinks and are growing more receptive to learning about new ingredients or products that can provide the same beverage benefits without the negative health impact.

At one time, Coca Cola and Pepsi held almost 95% of the soda market. This is slowly changing with the addition of many all-natural options. While each is different, the following categories of “not soda” are positioning themselves against the old giants of the industry and are winning big through strategic marketing and communications campaigns.

## Returning to real sugar

Consumers have been forgoing sugary sweet sodas in lieu of lighter, more refreshing beverages. This is partially because the kind of sweetener in most sodas, high-fructose corn syrup, is associated with health risks. Given the recent backlash against sugar and HFCS, today’s consumer is more inclined to associate sweetness with health risks, meaning that these sugary beverages are viewed by consumers as “too sweet.” Several soda companies are capitalizing on this by creating products made with cane sugar, cleverly marketing the less-sweet (read: “healthier tasting”) alternative to the HFCS brands. Sodas using cane sugar have less than a quarter of the sugar that regular sodas have — and fewer than a quarter of the calories. As consumers become more educated about ingredients and their health benefits, these “real sugar” brands are finding that this cane sugar story is one that consumers seek, and are willing to pay for.

## Natural alternatives to sweeteners

We’ve moved past the age when refined sugar alternatives were only Sweet’N Low and Equal. As part of the health revolu-

tion, a host of new, natural alternative sweeteners have come onto the market in recent years. Foremost among these is Stevia, an all-natural, zero-calorie sweetener made from the leaves of a plant by the same name. Backed again by a demand for healthier and natural products, these sweeteners — and the beverage companies that are touting them as key ingredients — are finding that consumers are becoming more and more interested in educating themselves on ingredients and their health effects. This is a winning proposition for brands looking to disrupt a crowded marketplace with an innovative product or ingredient, as education has traditionally been a major obstacle for marketing and communications efforts. As a result, the door is wide open for all-natural beverage companies that lean heavily on an ingredient story to drive sales.

## Artisanal sodas, all-natural ingredients

Bottlers have been turning to age-old recipes to find better ways to create beverages without chemicals and high-fructose corn syrup. Brands positioning themselves as authentic alternatives to the mainstream are popular with savvy consumers for a few reasons. First, they embody the wisdom that “small is beautiful.” Consumers today are more suspicious of mega-brands and large scale production than before, and the small-batch underdog is gaining much traction in this segment by highlighting their small size and authentic brand identities. These brands project intimacy and are leveraging it in a major way. Secondly these brands are effectively telling the story that using better, traditional ingredients and formulas usually makes a healthier product.

As a result, we’re seeing artisanal challenger brands riffing on well-known brands or products, such as brands that promote real ginger, honey or ginseng as alternatives to the traditional chemicals used to make popular sodas.

## Coconut water

One of the more popular and recent alternatives to soda, coconut water has been taming sugar cravings with fewer calories than its high-fructose cousin. Consumers love coconut water’s taste, and it’s packed with electrolytes, so Gatorade drinkers

have been making the switch. It also has plenty of easily digested carbohydrates, making it appealing to Atkins and Keto-sis fans. It only delivers 5.45 calories per ounce and 1.3 grams of sugar. Understanding the products’ appeal within targeted audiences, such as athletes or consumers with a low-carb lifestyle, is a key communications piece for brands in this space and we’re seeing many brands market these drinks as the healthy choice for post-workout pick-me-ups.

## Organic and affordable

While plenty of these options are much more nutritional than high-calorie sodas, they come with a hefty price tag. Consumers can expect to pay almost twice as much for one of these healthy alternatives. This has been a sore sticking point for the soda alternatives.

Luckily, as the market grows and consumers become even more acquainted with alternatives, we can expect to see more products and lower prices — something we expect brands to start focusing on as a key communications aspect as their niche industry becomes increasingly more crowded.

## Club soda and seltzer water

Perhaps not a new player in the space, the “not-soda” industry has widened the market for these traditional carbonated beverages. In recent years, club soda and seltzer water companies have been taking up more room on grocery store shelves than in recent memory. Leveraging consumers’ migration away from traditional soda companies, flavored and non-flavored sparkling water brands are focusing on communications design to show consumers they don’t need a sugary or overly flavored drink to enjoy a crisp beverage. Promoting the idea that club soda and seltzer deliver the same crisp, effervescent feeling as soda, without the additives, these brands continue to encroach on the soda consumer.

Erika Kauffman is Executive Vice President and General Manager of 5W PR. ○



Erika Kauffman

# Are Americans experiencing health fatigue?

An annual poll that gauges the importance and influence of top food news items shows Americans may now be exhibiting less interest in nutrition-related headlines than years prior.

By Samara Farber Mormar

After years of being deluged with information regarding the importance of a healthy diet and understanding what's in the food you eat and where it comes from, consumer fatigue may be setting in.

For more than a decade, Hunter PR has polled Americans regarding the top food stories of the year. When considering the impact of these stories on consumer behavior as well as the shifting tides of media consumption habits, a snapshot of America's ever-evolving food media palate emerges. Our 12th annual Food News Study, conducted in partnership with Libran Research & Consulting, suggests that though food news remains an important part of the American consumer's news diet, their appetite for acting on that news may be waning.

## The pendulum swings

Among consumers who changed their behavior in 2014 as a result of food news, significant decreases can be seen year-over-year in almost every instance measured by the Hunter PR Food News Study for behaviors related to food and health, many of which were previously on the upswing.

For example, while 50 percent of consumers reported that they are "checking food labels more often," this is an eight-point decrease from 58% in 2013. While 44 percent report they are "eating less processed food," 53% claimed to be doing so last year. "Paying attention to ingredient lists," is down 11%, the most of any behavior measured, from 53% in 2013 to 42% in 2014, a year when the "New Food Labeling Standards" was named the fourth biggest food story of the year. And though "The War on Sugar" landed at the number three spot in the Top Food Stories list, and "The Soda Calorie Cutback" was number seven, four percent fewer consumers reported that they are drinking healthier beverages in 2014 than the year prior as a result.

As compared to last year, in 2014 we

see fewer Americans claiming that food & nutrition stories are "very important," in general (28% vs. 32%), though 40% of Americans rated food-related news as more important than other news in 2014, which is on par from last year. If food related news remains important, why are the behavioral changes as a result of that news on the downswing? Could what's making news and the resulting impact have to do with where a growing number of consumers are getting their information?

Millennials, the generation on every marketer's mind these days, are the least likely of any age group to report changing many of these behaviors. Exercise, new foods and flavors, the environment, and technology have a stronger relationship to their eating habits than any other generation according to our study. They also consume news differently than any generation, and this is reshaping the overall food media landscape.

## Social surges as food content source

When it comes to where consumers source food news, while websites, television, magazines and newspapers rank as the top sources of food related content, social media is making serious inroads into the dissemination of food information.

Change in Behavior as a Result of Food News	2013 (n=499)	2014 (n=555)
I checked food labels more often	58%	50%
I'm eating less processed food	53%	44%
I now pay more attention to the ingredient list of my foods	53%	42%
I'm more likely to think about health consequences of what I eat	44%	40%
I pay more attention to where my food comes from	47%	37%
I'm drinking healthier beverages	41%	37%
I'm paying more attention to the safety of foods and beverages	49%	36%
I pay more attention to what my family consumes	38%	31%
I'm doing more comparison shopping for lowest prices	34%	27%
I stopped buying a certain brand of product	27%	21%

Hunter's annual poll of top food stories asked respondents in what ways, if any, eating or shopping habits had been influenced by recent food-related headlines.

Significant increases can be seen in social media as a source for recipes (up 7% from 2013 to 34% of the population) and nutrition information (up 8% to 22%). Not surprisingly, we see the greatest gains among Millennials, where Facebook is now the number-three source for nutrition infor-

mation, and the number-one source for general food news among all measured.

## Media channels influence awareness

When looking at the top food stories of the year through the lens of media channel consumption, it becomes clear that where each generation is accessing their news is directly correlated to the type of news they digest and consider important. Gen X-ers, Boomers and Matures all favor more traditional media sources (TV, radio, newspapers and magazines), where broader, less food-centric stories like the top two in this year's study — the western wrought and the shrinking bee population, respectively — tend to be covered. But with Millennials, who get their general food news from Facebook more than any other source (30%) and are self-curating their social media content, pop culture and cause-related news stories dominated: (1) Coke's "name" campaign, (2) GMOs, and (3) pumpkin spice mania.

Yes, you read that correctly — Coke's marketing campaign encouraging shared moments of happiness was the number-one food news story of the year among

Millennials, in the same year that "The War on Sugar" and "The Soda Calorie Cutback" were in the top ten overall, and four percent fewer consumers reported that they are drinking healthier beverages in 2014 than the year prior as a result.

What does this all mean for the modern food marketer? As always, an effective communications strategy must consider the target first, the channels they consume, and the type of information that lends itself to those channels, which in the age of social

media often means 140-character, shareable bites and feel-good, pretty lifestyle pictures versus lectures and longer-form storytelling.

Samara Farber Mormar is Senior Vice President of Insights & Strategy at Hunter Public Relations. ○



Samara Farber Mormar



## IBM taps Bergevin for Cyber-PR work

**T**ech PR veteran Paul Bergevin has joined IBM in the new post of VP-Cybersecurity Communications.

Based in Washington, he will work with IBM's security team to create overall cybersecurity policy for Big Blue and communicate with government officials and regulators about the need to deal with the threat posed by cybercrime.



Bergevin

Most recently, Bergevin was Global Comms. General

Manager at Intel in Silicon Valley.

Earlier, he led Edelman's Global Tech practice and held posts at Citigate Cunningham and Certive.

Bergevin reports to Mike Fay, VP-Communications.

IBM is in the midst of Project Chrome, which will result in the layoff of thousands of workers in what the company calls "workforce rebalancing."

CEO Ginni Rometty posted more disappointing financial results in Q4 as net income dropped 11 percent to \$5.5 billion on a 12% sales decline to \$24.1 billion.

Terry Anderson, formerly VP of Global Comms. at VMware and Cisco Systems, took over Bergevin's role at Intel as VP of Global Comms. ○

## Robinson joins ICR

**M**ichael Robinson, who has more than 30 years of corporate, PA and crisis experience has joined financial specialist ICR as Managing Director in Washington.



Hincker

He did a nearly 10-year stint at Levick, rising to the executive VP post and counseling clients such as AIG, Dubai's stock exchange and World Bank.

Robinson became a Partner at Omnicom's Chlopak

Leonard Schechter & Assoc. in Sept. 2013 and helped it rebrand to CLS Strategies. He recently left the DC firm.

Earlier, Robinson was Chief Spokesman for then Securities and Exchange Commission Chief Harvey Pitt, handling

issues connected to Sarbanes-Oxley and Enron/WorldCom collapses; Director of communications at Freddie Mac; VP-Corporate Communications at investment banker Friedman Billings Ramsey; Senior Media Advisor for global PA at Mobil and Spokesperson at the Justice Dept.

ICR also added financial journalist (CNBC, *Wall Street Journal*) John Jannarone to its New York office.

He reported for CNBC and contributed to "Fast Money," and "Closing Bell."

In an eight-year run at the WSJ, Jannarone worked from Singapore, London and New York. ○

## ConAgra Foods' Moritz moves to ADA

**S**tephanie Moritz, who was Senior Director for PR, social media and experiential marketing at ConAgra Foods, has moved to the American Dental Association as Chief Comms. Officer.

She'll handle PR, reputation and brand management for the Chicago-based organization representing nearly 160,000 dentists.

Moritz reports to Executive Director Kathleen O'Loughlin.

At ConAgra, Moritz worked with its newsroom and content marketing team for the consumer food group.

Earlier, she led communications and product publicity for Hershey Co. and Jim Beam Brands. ○



Moritz

## Emanuel spokesperson joins ASGK

**S**arah Hamilton, who was Spokesperson and Communications Director for Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, is now Managing Director at ASGK Public Strategies.

Earlier, Hamilton was PA Director for the Chicago Police Dept., Senior Press Secretary for Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Deputy Comms. Director at the Clinton Foundation.

Hamilton also worked on Hillary



Hamilton

Clinton's presidential campaign.

David Axelrod, who was President Obama's Political Strategist, and Eric Sedler, ATT PR executive & Edelman alum, founded ASGK.

Sedler said Hamilton's hire reflects the firm's commitment to lining up the best communications talent.

ASGK has about 50 staffers in Chicago, New York, Washington and Miami. ○

## Rogers takes Catholic Bishops PA slot

**J**ames Rogers joined the US Conf. of Catholic Bishops Feb. 18 as Executive Director of PA, a new position. He'll be in charge of strategy and communications messaging.

Most recently, the 20-year PR veteran was Executive Director of PR for Blue Cross Blue Shield Assn.

Earlier, he opened the Washington office for Kaiser Permanente and held the Comms. Secretary job at the Jesuit Conference.

The USCCB testified Feb. 11 before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Secretary in opposition to bills that would criminalize undocumented people and religious organizations that provide services to them. ○



Rogers

## Maron tapped for Twist

**W**2O Group's Twist Mktg. unit has hired Jon Maron, PR veteran with more than 20 years of experience, as Managing Director to open a Seattle office and build out its technology practice.

Most recently VP-Marketing/Corporate Communications at INRIX, Maron was VP-Americas Marketing for HTC, Senior VP-Technology at Ketchum and Senior Director of North America Marketing for mobile phone units at Sony Ericsson and LG.

Jennifer Gottlieb, Twist President, said Maron's consumer technology, global communication and mobile strategy experience will bolster the firm's ability to deliver "next practices" to the sector.

In a blog, Maron wrote that he joined W2O due to its ability to combine analytics, insights-driven content creation and thought leadership and ability to deliver the "wow behind the how" to audiences. ○

# O'Dwyer's guide to FOOD & BEVERAGE PR FIRMS

## ALLIDURA CONSUMER

450 West 15th Street, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10011  
212/229-8400  
Fax: 212/229-8496  
www.allidura.com  
allswell.allidura.com  
Twitter: @allidura

Whether cars or cameras, diapers or detergent, health has never been more ubiquitous than it is today. For some brands, health may be a new focus. Fortunately, it's always been at the center of ours. And, we've taken this knowledge and enthusiasm to some of the world's largest brands to help them connect with today's socially charged, health-minded consumers.

Allidura Consumer, part of the inVentiv Health Public Relations Group, takes an integrated approach to communications with capabilities spanning public relations, digital and social media, marketing and branding, graphic design and multimedia, and research and measurement.

Our client counsel allows brands to communicate across the wellness spectrum regardless of whether a brand's equity is in health or faced with a health challenge. Our meaningful insights and creative know-how have been tapped by a full range of consumer product and nutritional supplement brands, over the counter and beauty products, and food and beverage companies.

## ARTISAN PRODUCTION HOUSE

110 East 25th Street, Floor 2  
New York, NY 10010  
347/351-4804

**Erin Lahey Schwitter**, *Producer/ Partner*  
erin@artisanproductionhouse.com  
**Kara Leibowitz**, *Producer/Partner*  
kara@artisanproductionhouse.com

Artisan Production House is a full service production company specializing in food and lifestyle publicity. We are known for our integrated brand strategy through satellite TV junkets, live / launch events, videos and celebrity talent partnerships. We work with you to

tell your story and give it relevance, producing brand content that provides consumers something worth talking about. Our personal relationships with TV producers and media influencers throughout the country and high-end production capabilities (film-style shooters, editors and graphic designers) produce meaningful business results.

## BIZCOM ASSOCIATES

16301 Quorum Dr. #150-A  
Addison, TX 75001  
214/458-5751  
scottwhite@bizcompr.com

At BizCom Associates, we like food. Our client list is loaded with some of the most well-known brands in the restaurant and franchising industry. In fact, for over a decade we've helped launch some of the hottest young start-up chains or reposition and promote established multi-national brands.

From Red Mango's frozen yogurt to Wingstop's spicy hot wings, our team of writers, publicists and designers continually come up with creative publicity and promotional campaigns that drive sales to both consumers and franchise investors. We've helped our clients launch award-winning programs ranging from national new product launches to grass-roots, local store marketing promotional efforts.

Our current roster features high profile brands that include Edible Arrangements, Red Mango Frozen Yogurt and Smoothies, Huddle House, RedBrick Pizza, Capriotti's and Smoothie Factory, among others.

## BLAZE

1427 Third St. Promenade  
Suite 201  
Santa Monica, CA 90401  
310/395-5050  
310/395-5001  
mkovacs@blazepr.com  
www.blazepr.com

**Matt Kovacs**, *President*

Blaze is the trusted partner of choice for lifestyle challenger brands hungry for a real piece of the marketshare. Blaze has been retained by a growing number of savvy clients who want integrated

PR, influencer and social media strategies — and flawless execution. With more than two decades of relationships and a solid team founded in strategic approaches, Blaze is adroit in advancing client objectives and nimble to the quick-changing pace of media technologies.

Clients include: Blue C Sushi, Brewery Ommegang, Bridgepoint Foods, International Spirits, KeVita Sparkling Probiotic Beverages, Marriott Hotels, Michael's Restaurant Group, Mint Leaf Restaurants, Nawgan Alertness Beverage, ON Beverages, Stickhouse Gelato.

## CAROLYN IZZO INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS

37 North Broadway, Suite 1  
Nyack, NY 10960  
845/358-3920  
Fax: 845/358-3927  
info@ciicnews.com  
www.ciicnews.com

**Carolyn Izzo-Feldman**, *President*  
**Patricia Fahie**, *Executive VP*  
**Kate Wark**, *Senior Vice President*

Carolyn Izzo Integrated Communications (CIIC) is a highly respected public relations firm in the food and beverage space. Our staffers bring many years of experience from several of the country's top PR firms and for nearly 20 years, CIIC has been dedicated to servicing food and beverage brands.

Our experience in the F&B arena is notable, having launched our agency by putting Krispy Kreme Doughnuts on the map in the Northeast in the '90s. Since then, CIIC has represented a number of F&B brands, including, but not limited to, The Original Soupman, Sandella's, Morton's The Steakhouse, Marriott Hotels International, Kona Red Beverages, New Leaf Brands iced teas and lemonades and California Pizza Kitchen. We are adept at launches, openings and franchisor relations, and we are known for our networking expertise and extensive contacts in the trade, media and influencer categories, which we leverage to increase the level of reach, media coverage, and access for our clientele.

The CIIC team is made up of enthusiastic and connected PR professionals. Your CIIC service includes

day-to-day principal-led servicing from company executives, media specialists in New York and Miami who can build and escort an A-list media tour, arrange your appearance on network television shows, manage product sampling, and plan top-level events in your key markets.

It is our implicit goal to deliver the best value and the best results. This is why President Carolyn Izzo-Feldman launched her own PR firm in 1996 — to create the most incredible team of PR pros to back her mission.

## CISION

130 E. Randolph St., 7th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601  
866/639-5087  
info.us@cision.com

Cision is here to help you serve up savory media outreach. Cision features over 2,700 profiles on today's freshest food and beverage journalists and bloggers, pitching advice from the tastemakers themselves, and actionable social demographics to beef up your campaigns. We have everything you need to dish out your story. Learn more at cision.com.

## COYNE PUBLIC RELATIONS

5 Wood Hollow Road  
Parsippany, NJ 07054  
973/588-2000  
www.coynepr.com

5 Bryant Park, 28th Floor  
New York, NY 10018  
212/938-0166

12400 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 535  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
310/395-6110

**Tom Coyne**, *CEO*  
**Tim Schramm**, *Senior VP*  
**Lisa Wolleon**, *Senior VP*

Working in the food and nutrition space has been a cornerstone of Coyne since the agency's inception over twenty years ago. From representing well-established category leaders to growing challenger brands, Coyne combines sound strategic counsel, cutting edge creative elements and flawless execution to achieve a client's communications and business goals.



Coyne has represented many of the most prominent and successful food brands in the world, including Del Monte Foods, Newman's Own, General Mills, PepsiCo, Kraft, The Hershey Company, Eggland's Best, Bimbo Bakeries, Just Born, Campbell's, McCormick, Perrigo Nutritionals, and DuPont Nutrition & Health's soy protein business, among others.

We've introduced scores of products, launched numerous breakthrough campaigns and initiatives, and helped brands navigate significant industry challenges and crisis situations. We immerse ourselves in our client's business, becoming an extension of the communication and brand teams.

We create compelling storytelling, and match these skills with our broad and deep media relationships to drive new levels of attention for brands. Through proprietary tools, we identify, engage and activate the influencers who reach a brand's audience authentically. We understand how to tap into and amplify the voice of the brand evangelists. Our registered dietician network, consisting of 100+ influential and connected RD's and nutritionists, can be utilized to build, launch, and sustain campaign initiatives.

Our internal digital group, Studio C, is a full-service content production studio consisting of digital strategists, multimedia designers, website developers, and in-house creatives that offer clients a seamless extension of Coyne's public relations initiatives.

## CURRENT LIFESTYLE MARKETING

875 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2700  
Chicago, IL 60611  
312/929-0500  
www.talktocurrent.com

Current is an agency that lives up to its name. To us, being Current means constantly thinking of new ways to connect brands with their consumers by uncovering real insights that inspire purpose-driven programs and deliver measurable results. With expertise in content strategy, public relations and social, we help clients engage their target audiences through a strategic blend of media, influencer and advocate initiatives.

Bread and butter IS our bread and butter. From creating a made-for-TV premier barbecue competition for Kingsford charcoal to identifying food waste as an issue

that Glad Food Protection can help solve, we cook up award-winning work for a variety of food and beverage brands including Brita, goodnessknows, Hidden Valley, Johnsonville, Shamrock Farms and Soy Vay.

Founded in 2006, the Current team collaborates across offices in New York, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Talk to Current and discover our winning recipe.

## FINEMAN PR

150 Post Street, Ste. 620  
San Francisco, CA 94108  
415/392-1000  
www.finemanpr.com

**Michael Fineman, President**

Fineman PR, founded in 1988, specializes in Brand PR and crisis communications for food and beverage clients. Our strength is in building compelling 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, community relations, food safety education, social and digital media initiatives, and customer relations.

Agency work also includes wine PR and multicultural communications for nutritional supplements and retail restaurant chains.

## FINN PARTNERS

301 East 57th Street, 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
212/715-1600  
Direct: 212/593-5807  
cliff@finnpartners.com  
www.finnpartners.com

**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 food and beverage clients includes: Whole Foods, Cinnabon, Omaha Steaks, Dole, Thermador, Happy Egg, Reserve (restaurant reservations app),



In a category that has been feeling the heat of fad diet trends for years, Bimbo Bakeries (parent company of Arnold, Brownberry, and Oroweat bread) wanted a campaign that focused attention on the goodness of whole grains and called upon Coyne to lead the charge. With sandwiches leading as the number-one usage for sliced bread, Coyne developed an integrated communications campaign that included digital, PR and social efforts that celebrated the bread and the whole grain nutrition it provides.

Pinnacle Vodka, Beringer Wines, Penfolds, Bev Mo!, and others.

Our programs and media 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

328 S. Jefferson St., Suite 750  
Chicago, IL 60661  
312/258-9500  
Fax: 312/258-9501  
lcubillos@foodminds.com  
www.foodminds.com

FoodMinds is an award-winning

consulting and communications company boldly transforming the world view of food, nutrition and health. We harness communications, science and public affairs to establish unique selling propositions and produce novel food and nutrition programs. Clients come to FoodMinds when they want to create a better story that makes a difference, and tell it in a way that achieves their objectives through measurable results.

FoodMinds brings together the right mix of talented, seasoned and motivated professionals — from registered dietitians, consumer marketers and media strategists to PhDs, science writers and public affairs experts — to shape a new food frontier with our clients where

Continued on page 24



The team at FoodMinds.



**The Dead Rabbit, an award-winning cocktail bar known around the world, and a client of Hanna Lee Communications.**

## FOODMINDS

Continued from page 23

people are healthier and happier.

Clients include: Almond Board of California, American Heart Association, Applegate, Can Manufacturers Institute, Dairy Management, Inc., General Mills, Hass Avocado Board, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Nestlé, Sabra Dipping Company, The Walt Disney Company, and Welch's.

## FRENCH/WEST/VAUGHAN

112 East Hargett St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
919/832-6300  
www.fwv-us.com

**Rick French**, Chairman & CEO  
**David Gwyn**, President / Principal  
**Natalie Best**, Exec. VP / Director 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 87 public relations, public affairs, social media, advertising and digital marketing experts among its Raleigh, N.C. headquarters and New York City, Los Angeles and Tampa offices.

FWV is home to one of the country's largest food and beverage practice areas and has been ranked in the top 20 nationally by *O'Dwyer's* for more than a decade. 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 Whiskey, BRAND Napa Valley, Melitta Coffee, Grain and Barrel Spirits, Moe's Southwest Grill and Smithfields Chicken 'N Bar-B-Q.

FWV has also produced award-winning campaigns that significantly increased product sales for the likes of 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), Elevation Burger, 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.

The agency also executes multi-faceted digital and social media campaigns tied to effective earned media campaigns that together stimulate product trial, increase brand awareness and drive purchase intent.

## GIBBS-RBB STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

New York, NY  
www.Gibbs-rbb.com

**Christine Barney**, Principal  
**Tina Elmowitz**, Principal  
**Jeff Altheide**, Principal  
**Ron Loch**, Principal

When does one-plus-one equal three? When two independent agencies come together to zero in on changing the communications landscape in the food and beverage industry. Gibbs-rbb is a joint venture between two best-in-class agencies, G & S Business Communications and rbb Public Relations, built to manage communications from soil to shelf. This new joint venture offers an enlightened approach to food and beverage public relations — a holistic understanding of supply chains and global issues to help companies target the Conscious Consumer, a \$200 billion market of discerning consumers making buying decisions based on factors such as health, sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

Gibbs-rbb provides expertise and counsel from agribusiness all the way to product introductions. With 88% of all consumers showing signs of Conscious Consumer activity, Gibbs-rbb built a platform of communicating along the entire supply chain for brands seeking to grow their market share.

Gibbs-rbb's leadership team's food and beverage and CPG experience has been cultivated both in their professional and personal experience. Fostered by his Illinois farm roots, Jeff Altheide has spent more than 30 years in the industry, supporting public affairs, marketing and corporate communications programs in crop and livestock production, processing, packaging, and other aspects of the global food industry. Christine Barney, author of *The Breakout Brand Strategy: An Evolutionary Approach to Creating Customer Passion*, is known for developing multifaceted marketing communications campaigns that drive consumer action and loyalty. Tina Elmowitz has focused on consumer promotions and driving product trial for more than 20 years, bringing a breadth of award-winning experience, including Starbucks Coffee Company, M&M's, Duncan Hines and Vlasic. Finally, Ron

Loch has more than 25 years of experience serving clients in various market segments along the food value chain, and is a leading voice in the CSR movement, collaborating with global *Fortune* 500 companies.

Gibbs-rbb has offices in New York, Chicago, Miami and Raleigh.

Let Gibbs-rbb put our experience to work for your brand. Contact Jeff Altheide at JAltheide@gibbs-rbb.com or 312/648-6700.

## HANNA LEE COMMUNICATIONS

3 Columbus Circle, 15th floor  
New York, NY 10019  
212/527-9969  
www.hannaleecomunications.com

**Hanna Lee**, President

Headquartered in New York, Hanna Lee Communications, Inc. is an award-winning marketing agency that integrates traditional public relations with innovative social media marketing. It specializes in hospitality and lifestyle PR, including spirits, wine, food, bars/restaurants and travel, as well as event management. The agency only represents products and companies that it is passionate about. This outlook drives its well-accomplished excellence.

The agency has created a number of successful PR, event management and social media case studies that have earned recognition from prestigious national and international organizations that include *PR News*' Platinum PR Awards, *PRWeek* Awards, SABRE Gold Awards, PRSA-NY's Big Apple Awards, The Communicator Awards, The Bulldog Awards and the W3 Awards.

Hanna Lee Communications' client experience includes Danny Meyer's Union Square Hospitality Group's Porchlight Bar, The Dead Rabbit, Manhattan Cocktail Classic, Campari, Louis Royer Cognac, Santa Teresa Rum, PAMA Pomegranate Liqueur, Hangar 1 Vodka, Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey, TINCUP Whiskey, Leblon Cachaca, St-Germain Founder Rob Cooper's Lock Stock & Barrel Rye Whiskey and Slow & Low Rock and Rye, Forbidden Root Brewing Company, Tijuana Picnic, The Happiest Hour, Holiday Cocktail Lounge, Suffolk Arms, American

Continued on page 26

The April issue of *O'Dwyer's* will profile social media firms, as well as video & broadcast service companies. If you would like to be listed, contact Editor Jon Gingerich at 646/843-2080 or jon@odwyerpr.com



### BUSINESS TRAVEL



### MEETINGS & EVENTS



### VACATIONS CRUISES & MORE



## Customer Focused Technology Driven



**Gloria Bohan**  
President, Founder & CEO



**Nick Lananna**  
Client Services Manager

"Call me"



Omega World Travel brings 42 years of travel industry knowledge and expertise to you, combining personalized service and advanced travel technology solutions.

- Vendor and Sourcing Support
- Executive Travel Programs
- Travel Policy Consulting
- Risk Mitigation
- Mobile Technology
- Corporate Travel Solutions
- Duty of Care Technologies
- Global Capabilities
- Data Consolidation and Analytics
- 24/7 Support
- MICE Support & Management
- Leisure Travel - Cruise.com



1271 Avenue of the Americas  
Suite 4300 - New York, NY 10020  
646-693-7404 - nlananna@owt.net





**JSH&A helped Jim Beam drive visits to its Kentucky visitors' center during the busy holiday season by hosting the inaugural Jim Beam Home for the Holidays dinner, a bourbon-inspired event led by seventh-generation master distiller Fred Noe.**

## HANNA LEE COMMS.

Continued from page 24

Summits Premium Bottle Water and others.

Hanna Lee Communications is active on social media where it shares agency, client and industry news. "Like" us on Facebook at facebook.com/HannaLeeCommunications, and follow us on Twitter at @hannaleenyc and on Instagram at instagram.com/hannaleenyc. For more information, please visit hannaeecommunications.com.

## HUNTER PUBLIC RELATIONS

41 Madison Avenue, 5th Floor  
New York, NY 10010-2202  
smormar@hunterpr.com  
www.hunterpr.com  
212/679-6600

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

Celebrating our 25th anniversary in 2014, Hunter Public Relations is an award-winning, top-ranked 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 Foods, Smithfield, E&J Gallo Winery (Barefoot, Gallo Family Vineyards), Diageo (Johnnie Walker, Don Julio Tequila), and Outback Steakhouses. Tabasco Brand Pepper Sauce, our first client 25 years ago, is still a client today.

Our New York-based, 100-person firm offers a full suite of 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 influencer groups (including the epicurean and nutritional health communities) are among the firm's specific areas of expertise.

## ICR

685 Third Avenue, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Fax: 646/277-1201  
www.icrinc.com

**Thomas M. Ryan, CEO,  
Co-Founder  
Don Duffy, President**

Established in 1998 and privately held, ICR partners with companies to develop strategic communications programs that achieve business goals, manage risk, and enhance the value of the enterprise. The firm's pairing of capital markets veterans and senior communications professionals provides a highly-differentiated offering, one that continues to serve as the foundation for significant growth.

Today, ICR has approximately 500 clients across 20 industries and is one of the largest independent agencies in North America. The firm maintains offices in Boston, Connecticut, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Beijing.

In 2014, ICR once again saw double digit revenue growth driven by new client wins including Weibo, La Quinta Holdings, Freshpet, Rubicon Project, Extended Stay, AltheaDx and Paramount Group, among others. In January of 2015, ICR hosted the 17th Annual ICR XChange, the firm's annual investor conference, which drew more than 150 private and public company management teams and over 2,000 attendees.

## INK LINK MARKETING

7900 NW 155th St., Suite 108  
Miami Lakes, FL 33016  
305/631-2283  
info@inklinkmarketing.com  
www.inklinkmarketing.com

**Kim Miller, President  
Kampi Chaleunsouk, Senior VP  
of Client Services  
Lexi Rich, Director of Client  
Services**

Ink Link Marketing is a full-service marketing communications firm that specializes in the restaurant, foodservice and hospitality industries.

Specializations include PR, promotions, LSM, new product launches, grand openings, corporate communications and crisis communications. Collectively, the Ink Link Marketing team has over 35 years experience in marketing, public relations and promotions. Ink Link is headquartered in South Florida with a satellite office in the Los Angeles area.

Foodservice clients include: Church's Chicken, The Krystal Company, Ovation Brands (parent company to Ryan's, HomeTown Buffet, Old Country Buffet, Coun-



**Kimberly Miller, President of Ink Link Marketing.**

try Buffet, Fire Mountain and Tahoe Joe's) and MIC Food.

## JSH&A COMMUNICATIONS

2 TransAm Plaza Dr., Ste. 450  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60618  
jim@jsha.com  
www.jsha.com

**Jonni Hegenderfer, Jim Kokoris, Cheryl Georgas,  
Partners**

For 25 years, Chicago-based JSH&A has helped leading food and spirits brands drive consumer awareness, engagement and advocacy through integrated PR and social media programs that deliver high-impact results.

Named a top Consumer Marketing Agency of the Year, JSH&A has won multiple awards for media relations, influencer engagement and social media programs executed on behalf of brands like Jim Beam®, El Tesoro de Don Filipe® Tequila, Manwich, Alexia Foods and Safest Choice Eggs.

This success is a result of our strategic approach to program development. We pride ourselves on understanding our clients' audiences — what influences their decision-making and the channels they turn to for recommendations and inspiration. We then identify strategies and tactics that break through the noise in compelling, informative ways.

Whether it's identifying new ways for Jim Beam to share its heritage story with national media, or engaging influencers to help Alexia Foods drive awareness and trial of its all-natural side dishes and veggies, we consistently bring





Leveraging media partnerships with Meredith Corp. and Scripps Network, JSH&A helped Alexia Foods curate content for Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and AlexiaFoods.com that offered families weeknight meal solutions and reinforced the brand's quality ingredients.



Chef Jacquay Pfeiffer of The French Pastry School presenting on artisanal European baking methods at Kellen's client event – the 2014 Research Chef's Association's Annual Conference & Culinology® Expo.

great thinking and results to our clients.

## KELLEN

355 Lexington Avenue, 15th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
212/297-2100  
www.kellencommunications.com

1100 Johnson Ferry Rd.  
Suite 300  
Atlanta, GA 30342  
404/836-5580

750 National Press Building  
529 14th Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20045  
202/591-2440

**Joan Cear**, Senior Vice President  
**Rick Cristol**, President  
**Debra Berliner**, Senior VP

With more messages about diet, nutrition and food safety than ever before, how do you break through the clutter? Kellen combines decades of experience in food and nutrition with ingenuity and influence to make a measurable impact for our clients. We deliver integrated marketing communications solutions executed by specialists in publicity and promotion, nutrition communications, digital marketing and social media strategy, issues management, public affairs, website development and graphic design. In addition, Kellen's team includes registered dietitians, food scientists and technologists who bring unmatched expertise to our clients' programs. A leading resource for the food and beverage industry, Kellen has strong rela-

tionships with media outlets that cover this sector and extensive networks among health professional communities, academia and government regulators. From farm to fork, our professionals have the experience to help clients both promote and protect their products. Founded in 1945 as Sumner Rider & Associates, Kellen is an employee owned firm with offices in New York City, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Brussels and Beijing.

## LAMBERT, EDWARDS & ASSOCIATES

Grand Rapids—Lansing—Detroit  
616/233-0500  
lambert-edwards.com/FoodBevPR

**Jeff Lambert**, Principal  
**Matt Jackson**, Senior Director,  
Food and Beverage

Lambert, Edwards & Associates (LE&A) was founded in 1998 and has grown to become a top-60 PR agency, a top-20 investor relations firm and one of the largest food & beverage PR firms in the nation. LE&A is also a global partner in PROI Worldwide, the largest partnership of independent PR firms in the world spanning 120 cities on five continents. Our team is comprised of more than 40 professionals from global agency, Fortune 500, Wall Street and dot.com backgrounds, serving publicly traded and privately held clients

in 20 states and six countries.

We've established our position as a leading food & beverage PR firm as a result of the successful design, launch and execution of PR programs on behalf of prominent national brands including Chiquita®, Boulder Canyon Natural Foods™, Jamba®, Moose Tracks®, T.G.I. Friday's snacks™, Seattle's Best Coffee® and others. National earned media coverage from Associated Press, GMA, Good Housekeeping, Men's Health, Rachael Ray Magazine, Today and others earned the LE&A team the top award from *Bulldog Reporter* for Best New Product Launch in 2012.

Give us a call to find out how your brand may benefit from our experience.

## LANE

New York | Oregon | California  
www.lanepr.com  
wendy@lanepr.com  
503/221-0480

**Wendy Lane Stevens**, President

LANE builds buzz and drives trial and sales for brands from coast to coast. With over 25 years of experience across the food and beverage industry, LANE's seasoned specialists know how to target messages and elevate brands. Drawing on insights garnered from firsthand experience as well as from media, influencer and consumer circles, LANE's multifaceted campaigns connect across traditional and digital media, retailers

and restaurants, and events.

LANE's award-winning campaigns have produced measurable results for national and international clients in the wine, beer and spirits; water, juice and coffee; and natural, organic and specialty food categories including José Andrés Foods, Moonstruck Chocolate Co., Snake River Farms, Double R Ranch, International Olive Council, Oregon Strawberry Commission, Trailblazer Foods, Dutch Bros. Coffee, Tree Top, Earth2O, Wines from Spain, E. & J. Gallo Winery, Cupcake Vineyards, Sokol Blosser Winery, Hood River Distillers and Widmer Brothers Brewing.

## MAKOVSKY

16 East 34th Street, 15th Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
212/508-9600  
www.makovsky.com

**Ken Makovsky**, President & CEO  
**Gil Bashe**, EVP, Health, Practice Chair

**Lee Davies**, SVP, Health  
**Tom Jones**, SVP, Health  
**Arielle Bernstein**, MPP, GVP, Health  
**Alexandra Peterson**, MBA, GVP, Health  
**LANEY Landsman**, VP, Health

Named "Healthcare Agency of the Year" by *The Holmes Report*, Makovsky leads the healthcare communications field in its ongoing mission to improve the health of patients served by biotech,

— Continued on page 28



**LANE consistently garners national coverage for Moonstruck Chocolate Co.'s whimsical artisan chocolates, including its Chocolate Turkey, Bark Bars and Oregon Distillers Collection, which were featured on the TODAY Show, The Nibble, Parade, O, The Oprah Magazine and Redbook in 2014.**

## MAKOVSKY

Continued from page 27

pharmaceutical and health service companies through advocacy campaigns, corporate awareness programs, brand communications and disease education. The Practice has received more than 20 creative industry awards recently, including "Best in Healthcare," "Best Education/Public Service Campaign," and "Best of the Best" PR campaign across all industry sectors. Recently the agency has been named "Mid-Size Agency of the Year" and "Best Place to Work," among over 200 other awards over the years.

Makovsky staff are experts in product communications, consumer health, rare diseases, specialty pharma, patient advocacy, media relations, and issues engagement. We demonstrate deep knowledge of science, understanding of reimbursement policy, and sensitivity to the multifaceted interactions between patients, physicians, payers and policy agencies. Owing to that expertise, in 2013 Makovsky was tapped to handle 25% of all FDA PDUFA communications. It is the industry product launch

agency.

Our integrated communications approach enables clients to navigate the complex healthcare marketplace with clear results. The firm's award-winning efforts show creativity in connecting audiences via social media, coalition building and thought leader events such as TEDMED, Prix Galien and medical congresses including ACOG, ASCO, ACC, ESC, NLA, AHA and ICAAC.

Depth of health-industry experience from the biopharma industry, media, payer, and reimbursement communities enables Makovsky clients to help patients gain access to care at a time when care and cost are intertwined. Part of the Agency's success is in understanding how health needs are communicated. The firm's annual survey on patient use of social media is guiding industry decisions on investment in online platforms and is detailing the shifts between mobile and desktop information access. The ease of use and ability for patient communities to mobilize around urgent needs is changing how information can be exchanged.

Our commitment to client delight has resulted in a 90%+ year-to-year client-retention rate since



**Marketing Maven executes the media relations and social media for Jenni Rivera La Gran Señora Tequila at a consumer activation event.**

2004. Select Makovsky Health clients include: Actavis, Affinity Health Plan, Amarin, BMJ (formerly the *British Medical Journal*), Bristol-Myers Squibb, Duchesnay USA, H. D. Smith, Galien Foundation, The Jed Foundation, ICL, Kowa Pharmaceuticals, The Medicines Company, Merck, Vanda and WebMD.

## MARKETING MAVEN

135 East 57th Street, 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
212/967-5510  
[www.MarketingMavenPR.com](http://www.MarketingMavenPR.com)  
[info@marketingmavenpr.com](mailto:info@marketingmavenpr.com)

Los Angeles Headquarters  
310/994-7380

**Lindsey Carnett, CEO & President**  
[lindsey@marketingmavenpr.com](mailto:lindsey@marketingmavenpr.com)  
**Natalie Rucker, VP of Business Development**  
[natalie@marketingmavenpr.com](mailto:natalie@marketingmavenpr.com)

From an iconic tequila brand to an upscale burrito chain, the bicoastal team at Marketing Maven knows how to navigate food and beverage PR and social media campaigns. We specialize in showcasing your brand and increasing sales with unique pitch concepts distributed to top media for national TV, radio, newspaper, magazine and online coverage.

Is Spanish language media important to your target demographic? We have a bicultural Hispanic marketing department with a real-time pulse on cultural trends and connections to increase awareness.

We believe branding consistency

is crucial so Marketing Maven's social media department works closely with the media relations team on campaign strategy, content creation, promotion concepts and social media advertising execution. In addition to traditional reporting and advertising metrics, we offer a share of voice reporting, sentiment analysis and key influencer identification. This helps in competitor benchmarking, analyzing segments and discovering potential partners.

## MARX LAYNE & COMPANY

31420 Northwestern Hwy., #100  
Farmington Hills, MI 48334  
248/855-6777 ext.105  
[mlayne@marxlayne.com](mailto:mlayne@marxlayne.com)  
[www.marxlayne.com](http://www.marxlayne.com)

**Michael Layne, Managing Partner**

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

Services offered to clients include media relations, product launches, grand openings, crisis and issues management, internal communications, special events planning, community engagement programs, social media, online reputation management, direct mail, eblasts, graphic design, web development, and brochure and newsletter production.

Clients include luxury hotels, four-star and quick service restaurants, supermarket chains, and food and beverage manufacturers



and suppliers. We have successfully introduced concepts new to Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Florida and other markets.

Our creativity is boundless with one example being when Marx Layne conceptualized and managed all aspects of a product launch for a global restaurant brand that featured Nik Wallenda walking a high wire 80 feet above the City of Detroit, generating nearly \$1M in national media coverage. Wallenda later went on to break Guinness World Records crossing Niagara Falls and the Grand Canyon.

## MAXWELL PR + ENGAGEMENT

3934 SW Corbett Ave.  
Portland, OR 97239  
503/231-3086  
Fax: 503/231-3089  
vicky@maxwellpr.com  
www.maxwellpr.com

47 Maple St.,  
Burlington, VT 05401  
802/338-2556  
chrystie@maxwellpr.com

**Jennifer Maxwell-Muir**, *Founder & Principal*  
**Vicky Hastings**, *Mng. Dir./West*  
**Chrystie Heimert**, *Mng. Dir./East*  
**Erika Simms**, *VP*

Maxwell is an independently owned, Portland-based public relations and consumer engagement agency specializing in media and blogger relations, social media engagement, content marketing, consumer promotions and sampling for national brands. We work with leaders in the natural and organic food and beverage industry, premier tourism destinations and attractions, and businesses advancing new models that leave the world a better place.

Clients: Argyle Winery, Colum-

bus Foods, Dave's Killer Bread, Diamond Foods, Dr. Praeger's Sensible Foods, Kettle Brand, Kohana Coffee, La Terra Fina, McMenamins Pubs, Restaurants and Historic Hotels, Oregon Cherry Growers, Pacific Foods, Pamela's Products, Travel Astoria-Warrenton, U.S. Dry Pea & Lentil Institute, and Zenger Farm.

## M BOOTH

300 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10010  
212/481-7000  
www.mbooth.com

**Dale Bornstein**, *CEO*  
**Rich Goldblatt**, *SVP, Group Dir.*  
**Lauren Swartz**, *SVP, Dir., Lifestyle, Wine & Spirits*  
**Ilene Smith**, *RD, Nutrition Dir.*

This past year was a delicious one for M Booth Food & Beverage Group. The Group added GODIVA and Noosa Yoghurt to its robust lineup of clients. For GODIVA, the team created a program titled "Game Over, Game On." The multi-channel campaign included original video content and advertising on sports-related websites, as well as social-channel takeovers. For Noosa Yoghurt, a fan favorite of M Boothers, the team kicked off a campaign comprising influencer and media outreach, as well as digital support and events to help drive awareness for its great-tasting, farm-fresh, Aussie-style yoghurt.

With a long history in the wellness space, M Booth's Better4You offering is bolstered by a prominent lineup of experts in nutrition, food science and issues management. The agency had major success in leading a strategic communications and influencer effort to generate national awareness and trial for Beyond Meat, the emerg-



**Nik and Lijana Wallenda walked a high wire 80 feet above the City of Detroit to promote McDonald's coffee. The event and media campaign orchestrated by Marx Layne & Company generated nearly \$1 million in media coverage.**

ing plant-based protein and meat alternative. National broadcast and print features sizzled, sparking a major uptick in online visitors and a boost in sales at the distributor and retail levels. Switching from "meat" to fish, the agency led a strategic communications for the Global Organization for EPA and DHA (GOED) to highlight the role that Omega-3s play in heart health. Working in tandem multi-channels, M Booth succeeded in driving sales in a test market that will serve as a template for a national rollout in 2015.

From a national tailgating campaign to a celebration around National Pi Day, M Booth continued to build buzz for The Schwan Food Company, generating national and regional awareness for its leading grocery brands: Red Baron, Freschetta, Edwards and Mrs. Smith's. The agency also helped launch Schwan's Cares, an online-generated fundraising program that demonstrated a significant sales impact for the Schwan's Home Service division. For Sur La Table, we've continued to position the brand as a culinary authority by securing national and local TV segments with the brand's Resident Chefs from across the country.

Agency experience includes work for Unilever spreads and dressings, Tropicana, Dole Juices, Kellogg's, Quaker, Heinz, Pirate's Booty, Mrs. Dash, The National Pasta Association, Ronzoni and McNeil's Sun Crystals sweetener.

M Booth's dedicated Lifestyle, Wine & Spirits team has evolved into an integrated lineup of life-

style and digital experts. In 2014, the team added Patrón to its roster of top-shelf brands, serving as public relations AOR. Across the bar in the ever-trending Italian Bitters category, the team bolstered its work with Campari America as PR AOR for Campari + Aperol brands, leveraging bartender, chef and foodie brand advocacy to drive the charitable Negroni Week initiative — which sparked a 40% jump in sales.

M Booth continued its 10+ year tenure working across Edrington's Scotch brands The Macallan Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Highland Park Single Malt Scotch Whisky and The Famous Grouse Scotch Whisky along with Brugal Rum, creating integrated programs to reach key media, influencers and tastemakers through luxury activations, brand partnerships, promotional events and intimate tastings, as well as major product launches among the likes of The Macallan Rare Cask, Highland Park Dark Origins and The Macallan Masters of Photography Mario Testino Edition. Simultaneously, the integrated team manages The Macallan's and Brugal's digital channels, developing content and strategic visual storylines married with social-channel engagement that includes partnerships with digital influencers and like-minded brands for cross-promotion.

NOLET'S Finest Gins as well as Italian-American wine importer and marketer Banfi Vintners — producers of the wines of Castello Banfi — also continue longstanding work with the team.



**As AOR for Sur La Table, M Booth is spearheading a campaign to drive store traffic and media outreach tapping the retailer's resident chefs.**



**Pierson Grant Public Relations** orchestrated a guest segment and food tasting for client **Zona Fresca**, a dynamic restaurant franchisor, to appear live in studio on a popular South Florida radio and TV show.

## MWW

304 Park Avenue South, Fl. 8  
New York, NY 10010  
212/704-9727  
tนาughton@mww.com  
www.mww.com

**Tara Naughton**, *Executive VP,  
Consumer Lifestyle Marketing*

The food and beverage industry is in a constant state of evolution, where shifting consumer tastes (quite literally), new government regulations, and volatile commodity markets are continually changing the landscape. In this type of environment, we know that staying ahead of the industry trends is key to establishing and maintaining trust in your brand — and we can help your brand remain fluid while seizing opportunities before your competitors.

At MWW, we make our clients Matter More™ to their stakeholders by establishing relationships between brands and consumers through integrated public relations and marketing activities that drive awareness, engagement and consideration. We expand media coverage beyond food media 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 a new product launch in a competitive category, we help position our client brands as a vital ingredient in consumers' lifestyles. Let us be the recipe to your success.

## OGILVY

The Chocolate Factory  
636 Eleventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10036  
212/880-5200  
christopher.myles@ogilvy.com  
www.ogilvypr.com

**Christopher Myles**, *Exec. VP,  
Brand Marketing Director*

Long before consumers walk into a store or click the "buy" or "reservation" button, they are engaged in digital conversations that drive their perceptions and purchases. To this end, Ogilvy has grown the world's largest global team to deliver digital and social solutions to influence and amplify traditional media relations delivering on the promise of an integrated paid, owned and earned media solution.

Using an integrated model for designing programs combining a client's owned media with strategies meant to drive word of mouth, gain visibility and initiate conversations both online and offline is especially important for our food and CPG clients. A strategic overlay of traditional media and social relations along with paid digital media extends the reach of our programs, enhances positive perception and increases sales.

The caliber of Ogilvy's clients allows us to attract and retain extremely talented practitioners, who combine deep technical expertise and industry know how to conquer challenging business situations, difficult messages and shifting global trends for clients such as Darden Restaurants, 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.

## PADILLACRT

1101 West River Pkwy., #400  
Minneapolis, MN 55112  
612/455-1700  
PadillaCRT.com

320 West 13th Street, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10014  
212/229-0500

**Mark Raper**, *President*  
**Pablo Olay**, *Vice President,  
Food, Beverage & Nutrition*  
**Jason Stemm**, *Vice President,  
Food, Beverage & Nutrition*

PadillaCRT is a top 15 independent public relations and communications company. We use insightful strategies to help our clients develop deep connections with their audiences. Our 360-degree approach includes research, branding, marketing, advertising, design, digital, social, mobile, media relations, corporate and investor relations and crisis management.

Over the years, we have built one of the strongest, most experienced marketing and branding teams of food, beverage and nutrition professionals in the country. We represent both brands and marketing cooperatives, and we cover all audiences: consumer, foodservice, retail and manufacturing. Our food and beverage teams' unique in-house resources include a culinary studio proximate to national media in New York City and an extensive beverage alcohol and food-focused library. Clients in the food and beverage sectors include Hass Avocado Board, Land O'Lakes, Les Vins Georges Duboeuf, North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission, Prosciutto di Parma, U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council and Wines from Rioja (Spain).

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

## PEPPERCOMM

470 Park Ave. South  
4th Floor North  
New York, NY 10016  
212/931-6100  
Fax: 212/931-6159  
agencymarketing@peppercomm.com

www.peppercomm.com

**Steve Cody**, *Co-CEO &  
Co-Founder*  
**Ed Moed**, *Co-CEO &  
Co-Founder*  
**Ann Barlow**, *Partner &  
President, West Coast*  
**Janine Gordon**, *President,  
Luxury & Lifestyle*  
**Maggie O'Neill**, *Partner &  
Managing Director*

Peppercomm is an award-winning strategic marketing and communications firm headquartered in New York City with offices in San Francisco, Boulder and London that listens first, last and always. We pride ourselves on listening to our clients' needs as well as the wants and needs of their various audiences. That focus on listening before engaging (or creating) inspired not only our tagline: "Listen. Engage. Repeat." but our strategic approach.

Our integrated team of specialists work together to create cohesive campaigns that leverage the right communications and marketing vehicles across all touch points. From major household names to elite luxury brands, we have helped clients reposition and rebrand; launch entirely new brands and position global brands in the U.S. market; build websites and social footprints; launch content strategies; create brand experiences; drive executive visibility; prepare for and mitigate crises; engage key audiences and ultimately deliver results for our clients.

Our experience runs deep and includes work for brands such as Procter & Gamble, General Mills, Sunrise Soya Foods, Dean & DeLuca, Malibu-Kahlua International, Diageo, Bacardi Imports, DiSaronno, Glenlivet, The Capital Grille, '21' Club, Texas de Brazil, pinkberry, Blimpie International, TGI Fridays, Dr. Praeger's, French Culinary Institute and *Zagat Dining Guide*, among others.

## PIERSON GRANT PUBLIC RELATIONS

6301 N.W. 5th Way, Suite 2600  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309  
954/776-1999  
www.piersongrant.com  
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, and innovative local restaurants such as Shooters Waterfront and Doris Italian Market. Based in Fort Lauderdale, Pierson Grant is a member of the IPREX global network.

## POLLOCK COMMUNICATIONS

665 Broadway, Suite 1200  
New York, NY 10012  
212/941-1414  
Fax: 212/334-2131  
lpollock@pollock-pr.com  
www.lpollockpr.com

**Louise Pollock, President**

Pollock Communications is an independent PR and marketing communications agency that offers cutting edge expertise for food, beverage, health & wellness, and lifestyle clients. Pollock Communications is the leader in food and nutrition healthcare professional marketing and key opinion former advocacy outreach. 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. For more than 20 years, we have been advisors to *Fortune* 100 food and beverage companies and global commodity foods, working to direct, shape and amplify their health and wellness stories. By strategically targeting and influencing food policymakers, media, retail professionals and the healthcare community, Pollock Communications delivers results that change consumer perceptions and protect and enhance a brand's position in the market. We utilize evidence-based science and influencer advocacy to achieve measurable results in brand awareness, consumer perceptions, healthcare professional (HCP) recommen-

dations, media coverage and purchasing decisions.

In addition to PR practitioners and marketers, our staff includes media-savvy Registered Dietitians who can address health & nutrition issues that are top-of-mind for today's print, broadcast and online journalists. We have developed traditional and social media programs, as well as in-store and influencer promotions that reach target influencers, media and consumers. Over the last two decades, Pollock has cultivated long-term relationships and trained a network of spokespeople, including media Registered Dietitians, celebrity chefs, medical doctors and scientists, who are available and ready to deliver key messages for a variety of our clients in broadcast, print and social media.

We believe in pushing boundaries, breaking barriers and asking, "what if?" We diligently do our homework to develop an executable, strategic plan. It includes assessing the environment for challenges and opportunities, setting the job-to-be-done, creating a strategy, identifying key targets, agreeing on a campaign theme, developing impactful tactics with measurable objectives and determining KPIs.

Clients: Abbott, Ajinomoto Food Ingredients, LLC, American Society of Hypertension, BackJoy, Brassica Protection Products, LLC, Cranberry Institute, Cranberry Marketing Committee of the USA, Dairy Management Institute, Global Dairy Project, Good Health Snacks, Gourmet Nut, PepsiCo Global Nutrition Group, Prestige Brands: PediaCare, FiberChoice and Beano, Purdue Products: Senokot and Colace, Tea Council of the USA, The Dannon Company, Unilever Brands: Promise, Country Crock and I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!, and USA Rice Federation.

## QUINN

48 West 38th Street, Penthouse  
New York NY 10018  
212/868-1900  
www.quinn.pr  
www.quinn.pr/ideas

407 Lincoln Rd  
Miami Beach, FL 33139  
786/600-3954

**Florence Quinn, President**  
Direct: 212/868-1900 x223  
fquinn@quinn.pr

Quinn's Food, Wine + Spirits division is becoming the go-to in



**Quinn won HSMAl's Best of Show for the launch of the Waldorf Astoria New York's roof-to-table program. Worldwide coverage in more than 275 TV and print outlets produced over 3.4 billion impressions.**

FWS. We think like owners and brand managers to achieve client goals. We drive top media results, creative ideas, digital/social media initiatives and important partnerships.

Quinn won HSMAl's Best of Show for the launch of the Waldorf Astoria New York's roof-to-table program. Worldwide coverage in more than 275 TV and print outlets produced over 3.4 billion impressions. The campaign spurred hundreds of requests to visit the rooftop phenomenon.

Within a few months of working with Del Frisco's Restaurant Group, we drove thousands of dollars in revenue through creative programming, two profile features in the *Wall Street Journal* as well as the "Today Show," CNN.com, *Vanity Fair* and ABC News.

We brought Club W to its target audiences with a feature in the *Wall Street Journal* and a segment on Fox Business as well as placements in Bloomberg, Condé Nast,

*Wine Enthusiast*, NYLON Guys, Refinery29 and the *Boston Globe*.

For the deep blu seafood grille in Orlando's saturated restaurant market, we increased visitations by 22% with 60+ media placements, awards and accolades. We are rolling out its second location.

For the iconic Versace Mansion in South Beach, Quinn re-launched its signature restaurant with articles in *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Centurion*, *Departures*, *New York Times*, *The Telegraph*, *Harper's Bazaar Germany*, *Vogue Brasil* and segments on E! and Extra TV.

In NYC, we launched Chelsea Market's first cookbook in *The New York Times*, *Town & Country*, *Cosmopolitan* and Food Network.

Quinn represents Rome's only three-Michelin-starred restaurant, La Pergola at the Rome Cavalieri, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, where reservations are made months in advance.

Continued on page 32



**Pollock Communications and the Cranberry Marketing Committee get ready to talk cranberries with school foodservice professionals at the 2014 School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference in Boston, MA.**

## QUINN

— Continued from page 31

TV placements run the gamut from Bravo's "Top Chef Master," "Top Chef: All Stars," "The Chew" and the Cooking Channel to "Nightline," CNN, "The Early Show," "Today Show" and "The Martha Stewart Show."

Our culture of teamwork and innovation fosters a highly productive atmosphere among 40+ professionals in NYC and Miami. The focus is on results for our lifestyle clients.

## RFIBINDER

950 Third Avenue, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
212/994-7600  
www.rfibinder.com  
Twitter: @rfibinder

**Amy Binder, CEO**  
**Atlanta Rafferty, Chief**  
**Performance Officer**

At RFIbinder, we understand the food, retail and restaurant industry in all its facets, and we bring a broad set of skills and knowledge to the food category. The brands we represent range from frozen foods and quick service restaurants to premium chocolate and specialty foods, to wines and beers from all over the world. We have substantial experience working with government associations and food cooperatives, developing and executing plans that work internationally, nationally, and at the local level. And our groundbreaking work with emerging biotechnology companies in educating the market about new and innovative product ingredients has generated significant media coverage and powered consumer trial and acceptance. Continued attention from policy makers, advocacy groups and consumers on nutrition, labeling and ingredient transparency brings a whole new dimension and set of skills to promoting food categories and brands.

We have transformed Riesling from a niche to an "it" wine, bringing a younger audience into the fold, making it one of the fastest growing varietals and doubling its sales over ten years. We helped Talenti Gelato & Sorbetto become the best-selling gelato in the country, and launched its first ever pop-up store in New York City's Bryant Park. We put Malaysian food on the map with a sweeping inte-

grated marketing communications campaign, featuring large-scale consumer events, celebrity chef engagements, media and advertising campaigns and digital programs. We helped Truvia® natural sweetener become the country's #2 sugar substitute and Dunkin' Donuts retain the #1 ranking for customer loyalty in the coffee category for six years running.

RFIbinder 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 assist clients in engaging and educating influencers and understanding consumer behavior and purchase attitudes and in understanding market conditions. We provide a wide array of services, from trade and consumer promotions, experiential marketing, influencer and traditional media outreach, to digital and social media campaigns, food/ingredient issues management, and trade and investor relations.

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

## ROGERS & COWAN

PACIFIC DESIGN CENTER  
8687 Melrose Ave., 7th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90069  
310/854-8117  
Fax: 310/854-8106  
www.rogersandcowan.com

**Tom Tardio, CEO**

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, restaurants, 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 television and digital content, leverage celebrity spokespeople for media opportunities, integrate products into entertainment content, 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 Food Network, The Cooking Channel, Bertolli, The Coca-Cola Company, EKOCYCLE with will.i.am, NutriFusion, Sprite Refreshing Films, Dylan's Candy Bar, Betty Crocker, Lucky Charms, Wheaties, General Mills, JuiceBlendz, Madison's New York Grill & Bar, Morton's Steak House, Ferguson Wines, Skinnygirl Cocktails, Zipz Wine, Wines that Rock, Sobieski Vodka, Fanta Search for the 4th Fantana, The Munchies People's Choice Food Awards, Club EATalian, and the Los Angeles Times Celebration of Food & Wine.

## RUDER FINN

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

**Kathy Bloomgarden, CEO**  
**Scott Schneider, Chief Digital Officer**  
**Maryann Watson, President, RFI Studios**  
**John McInerney, Senior Vice President, Brand Marketing**

In today's food and beverage industry, there are more products and technologies vying for consumers' attention every day, and in order to truly drive meaningful engagement, brands need an innovative and authentic communications strategy that encourages brand-to-fan connections. With this in mind, our emphasis is on creative and social activities that

drive community building and consumer interaction. We help connect brands with emerging digital platforms and rising social and online influencers to engage consumers in new and meaningful ways while also helping to foster brand consumer experience that personalizes brands and differentiates them in a highly competitive market.

Ruder Finn works with food and beverage clients to develop and implement plans around building communities, establishing brands, content creation, event activations, product launches, sustaining product growth and visibility and brand partnerships. 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 highlighting 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.

Ruder Finn has worked with many clients in the Food and Beverage industry, ranging from consumer brands such as Sour Patch Kids, McDonald's and SodaStream to high lifestyle brands such as Chateau Margaux and Moët Hennessy Diageo.

## SCHNEIDER ASSOCIATES

Member of the Worldcom Public Relations Group  
Schneider Associates  
2 Oliver Street, Suite 402  
Boston, MA 02109  
617/536-3300  
www.schneiderpr.com

**Joan Schneider, CEO & Founder**  
**Phil Pennellatore, President**

How do you make ice cream newsworthy in winter, motivate the media to swoon over grilled cheese sandwiches, or build consumer and influencer awareness for a startup or emerging brand? Ask Schneider Associates. We are passionate about creating and executing innovative and measurable campaigns to launch, re-launch and accelerate growth for food and

— Continued on page 34





# LOG-ON

DIRECT MAIL  
LEADERS FOR OVER 20 YEARS

THE MOST EXTENSIVE OFFERING OF SERVICES IN THE INDUSTRY...

WE DELIVER ON YOUR DIRECT MAILING & PRINTING NEEDS

100% OF THE TIME. HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?



#### DIRECT MAIL

Automatic & Hand Inserting  
Ink Jet & Laser Addressing  
Presorting



#### PRINTING

Digital & Offset Printing  
One-to-One Marketing  
On-site Creative Department



#### FULFILLMENT

Product & Packaging Fulfillment  
Inventory Management  
Storage & Warehousing



#### PRESS KITS

Press Kit & Product Assembly  
CD/DVD Duplication & Mailings  
Press Release Distribution



#### DATABASE

Computer Services  
NCOA  
Personalization / Variable Data



#### TARGETER®

Broadcast Faxing  
E-mail Targeting  
Media Contact System

520 8th Avenue, 14th Floor New York, New York 10018

T: 212.279.4567 • F: 212.279.4591 • [www.log-on.org](http://www.log-on.org)



**From the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco to the set of *Today* in New York, Taylor's PR and social amplification of The Bulleit Woody Tailgate Trailer has transformed a mobile marketing unit into a conversation-driving staple for the nation's fastest growing bourbon brand.**

## SCHNEIDER ASSOCS.

Continued from page 32

beverage brands. We know how to craft fully integrated communications programs that create news while solving business challenges.

SA also specializes in multi-unit marketing, creating grand opening events and launching new products or programs for franchises. Services include messaging, media relations, social media, special events, creative design, digital marketing, spokesperson training, influencer outreach and crisis communications.

Schneider Associates is a full-service public relations and integrated marketing communications agency specializing in Launch Public Relations®, a proprietary method of launching new and revitalizing iconic products, services, companies and communities to build awareness, excitement, and sales. Visit [www.schneiderpr.com](http://www.schneiderpr.com)

## SPONG

110 North Fifth Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
612/375-8500  
[www.spongpr.com](http://www.spongpr.com)

**Julie Batliner**, Managing Director  
**Grete Lavrenz**, Senior Principal,  
Chair, Food and Beverage  
**Erika Collins**, Director of New  
Business

If you can no longer stomach the same stale, tasteless ideas, perhaps it's time for some fresh thinking. Spong leads the food, beverage, nutrition and wellness arena — representing some of the biggest

brands. Our list of envied food and beverage clients includes: packaged goods (Arla and Castello cheeses, Jack Link's Beef Jerky, Jennie-O Turkey, MOM Brands and Malt-O-Meal cereals); food and beverage containers and storage (Genuine Thermos Brand); and retail (SUPERVALU and Save-A Lot). We work with food industry leaders, consumer groups, celebrity chefs, nutritionists, commodity groups, regulatory organizations, social influencers, bloggers and experts in general, on a regular basis. Our relationships go beyond media. We know the right people to target with the right program, product, campaign or cause. And they know us.

## TAYLOR

The Empire State Building  
350 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3800  
New York, NY 10118  
212/714-1280  
[www.taylorstrategy.com](http://www.taylorstrategy.com)

**Tony Signore**, CEO & Managing  
Partner  
**Bryan Harris**, COO & Managing  
Partner

Taylor partners exclusively with category leading consumer brands 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 Austin. 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 27 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.

The agency also partners with leading consumer food brands for a wide range of services, including product introductions, sponsorship activations, and social media strategy.

## WEBER SHANDWICK

875 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2400  
Chicago, IL 60611  
312/988-2400  
[www.webershandwick.com](http://www.webershandwick.com)

**Gail Heilmann**, President  
**Janet Helm, MS, RD**, Chief Food  
& Nutrition Strategist, North  
America

Weber Shandwick has built one of the largest and most successful 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 food industry groups like milk and pork into brands with award-winning campaigns that have changed perceptions and built demand.

Our food clients range from the indulgent to functional, and they each have a story to tell. In today's "always-on" world, we help brands engage, always. We manage the online communities of our multiple food clients and have extensive experience in creating engaging content and managing issues. Our work involves launching new products, reinvigorating brands, establishing thought leadership, and leveraging scientific research to change the way consumers and influencers think about specific foods or ingredients.

We have a dedicated food and nutrition team that includes 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 partnerships, 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. Weber Shandwick created and continues to support the Nutrition Blog Network — an aggregator of more than 700 blogs written by registered dietitians. Our food practice specialists have extensive experience in engaging the communities that matter most to our food and beverage clients.

## ZENO GROUP

A Daniel J. Edelman Company  
44 E. 30th Street, 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
212/299-8888  
Fax: 212/462-1026  
[www.zenogroup.com](http://www.zenogroup.com)

**Barby K. Siegel**, CEO

Zeno Group is a global, integrated communications agency dedicated to transforming clients' business. We are proud to be at the table with some of the world's leading food, beverage and nutrition brands including Taco Bell, Anheuser Busch, Hershey's, Quaker Oats, Bacardi Rums, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Blue Diamond Almonds and Pepperidge Farm, among others.

We work at the intersection of brand building and corporate reputation, delivering integrated, content-driven campaigns that inspire consumers and other stakeholders to take action and change behavior.

Unafraid to challenge the status quo, we are driven daily by our "Fearless Pursuit of the Unexpected" — highly creative, breakthrough ideas, grounded in strategy and our insight-driven planning.

Our intense network collaboration and one P&L model ensures that clients have the full force of Zeno every day. 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.

We sum this all up in one word: Zeno-licious. ○



# O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

## FOOD & BEVERAGE PR FIRMS

Firm		Net Fees (2013)	Firm		Net Fees (2013)
<b>1.</b> Edelman	New York	<b>\$97,122,009</b>	<b>27.</b> LANE	Portland, OR	<b>\$985,585</b>
<b>2.</b> Hunter PR	New York	<b>13,437,276</b>	<b>28.</b> Kohnstamm Communications	St. Paul, MN	<b>941,375</b>
<b>3.</b> APCO Worldwide	Washington	<b>13,252,857</b>	<b>29.</b> J Public Relations	San Diego	<b>875,436</b>
<b>4.</b> MWW	New York	<b>7,459,000</b>	<b>30.</b> BizCom Associates	Addison, TX	<b>750,000</b>
<b>5.</b> Taylor	New York	<b>6,648,000</b>	<b>31.</b> LEVICK	Washington	<b>677,847</b>
<b>6.</b> FoodMinds	Chicago	<b>6,432,640</b>	<b>32.</b> Konnect Public Relations	Los Angeles	<b>653,740</b>
<b>7.</b> Formula PR	New York	<b>6,429,655</b>	<b>33.</b> BLAZE	Santa Monica	<b>651,531</b>
<b>8.</b> RF   Binder Partners	New York	<b>5,664,439</b>	<b>34.</b> IW Group	W. Hollywood	<b>588,000</b>
<b>9.</b> Zeno Group	New York	<b>5,642,090</b>	<b>35.</b> VPE Public Relations	S. Pasadena	<b>564,135</b>
<b>10.</b> PadillaCRT	Minneapolis	<b>5,591,120</b>	<b>36.</b> rbb Public Relations	Miami	<b>544,929</b>
<b>11.</b> Regan Comms. Group	Boston	<b>5,120,400</b>	<b>37.</b> LEWIS	San Francisco	<b>448,000</b>
<b>12.</b> 5W Public Relations	New York	<b>3,300,000</b>	<b>38.</b> Stuntman PR	New York	<b>431,950</b>
<b>13.</b> W2O Group	San Francisco	<b>2,576,000</b>	<b>39.</b> Hope-Beckham	Atlanta	<b>427,658</b>
<b>14.</b> Linhart Public Relations	Denver	<b>2,517,703</b>	<b>40.</b> O'Malley Hansen Comms.	Chicago	<b>425,000</b>
<b>15.</b> Jackson Spalding	Atlanta	<b>2,263,094</b>	<b>41.</b> MorganMyers	Waukesha, WI	<b>360,558</b>
<b>16.</b> French   West   Vaughan	Raleigh	<b>1,967,850</b>	<b>42.</b> TransMedia Group	Boca Raton, FL	<b>250,000</b>
<b>17.</b> Dye, Van Mol & Lawrence	Nashville	<b>1,757,791</b>	<b>43.</b> Seigenthaler Public Relations	Nashville	<b>231,622</b>
<b>18.</b> Finn Partners	New York	<b>1,742,847</b>	<b>44.</b> Rosica	Paramus, NJ	<b>215,200</b>
<b>19.</b> Ruder Finn	New York	<b>1,659,000</b>	<b>45.</b> Maccabee	Minneapolis	<b>202,460</b>
<b>20.</b> SS PR	Northfield, IL	<b>1,395,000</b>	<b>46.</b> Trevelino/Keller	Atlanta	<b>200,000</b>
<b>21.</b> SPM Communications	Dallas	<b>1,373,739</b>	<b>47.</b> The Buzz Agency	Delray Beach, FL	<b>136,848</b>
<b>22.</b> Maxwell PR + Engagement	Portland, OR	<b>1,219,639</b>	<b>48.</b> PAN	Boston	<b>120,000</b>
<b>23.</b> Coyne PR	Parsippany, NJ	<b>1,155,000</b>	<b>49.</b> Sachs Media Group	Tallahassee	<b>95,082</b>
<b>24.</b> Allison+Partners	San Francisco	<b>1,100,000</b>	<b>50.</b> McNeely Pigott & Fox PR	Nashville	<b>94,863</b>
<b>25.</b> Peppercomm	New York	<b>1,079,419</b>	<b>51.</b> Rasky Baerlein Strategic Comms.	Boston	<b>64,782</b>
<b>26.</b> Lambert, Edwards + Associates	Grand Rapids, MI	<b>1,073,649</b>	<b>52.</b> Marketing Maven PR	Camarillo, CA	<b>37,482</b>



# One bad call is all it takes

By Fraser Seitel

**W**hat do the coach of the Seattle Seahawks and the anchor of the NBC Nightly News have in common?

If you said, "They each sank their reputations with one bad call," well ... ding ... ding ... we have a winner!



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

As both Seattle coach Pete Carroll and NBC anchor Brian Williams discovered, in the year of our Lord 20 and 15, "reputation" is a most perishable commodity, which may take years to build but can be lost in the blink of an eye.

That's what happened when Carroll took the hit for the mind-numbing one-yard pass that cost his team the Super Bowl, and when Wil-

liams acknowledged he had fibbed about being on a helicopter under attack in Iraq. Each was a momentary lapse that ruined years of credibility creation.

Indeed, organizations and individuals concerned today with building their credibility — and who isn't? — must do nothing less than rethink their reputations to deal with the eminently more dangerous landscape they confront.

For PR professionals whose job it is to build credibility, the following new realities must always be considered.

## Everybody's a journalist

And we're not just talking about pretend journalists like Al Sharpton or Sean Hannity. No, today everybody is a journalist, and I mean, "everybody": two billion Internet users, one billion Facebook users, one billion camera phones, 150 million blogs, and 200 million Twitter users.

Where once the "old guard" journalists like Harry Reasoner and John Chancellor and Walter Cronkite were trusted, today's "new breed" journalists — like Bill Maher and Bill O'Reilly and (ye gods!) Nancy Grace — are respected only by the zealots and the naive.

In such an environment, when you make a grievous public error, like the Pete Carroll touchdown call, you are destined to die a thousand deaths as citizen journalists eviscerate you on the Internet.

## Standards are lower

Beyond the ubiquitous misinformation and grammatical mistakes that pervade print, broadcast and Internet journalism, there is the reality that today's reporters don't even attempt to be objective.

In the old days — before cable and the 'net — journalists learned that while pure objectivity is impossible — we all have biases and predilections — nonetheless, a reporter's challenge was to try to be as neutral as possible, presenting both sides of any story.

Today, such objectivity isn't even considered. And that's why, according to the most recent Gallup Poll, 21% of Americans rate "the honesty and ethical standards" of journalists as "low or very low."

## Support is lagging

At the same time, trust in once-respected institutions across the board has waned.

According to the most recent Harris Interactive reputation survey, trust in major American institutions has rarely been lower. In terms of institutions in which American trust has deteriorated over recent years, the following rank worst: Congress, the federal government, mortgage lenders, Wall Street, the White House, major corporations, health insurance companies, and banks. With such little goodwill trade on, little wonder people are quick to believe the worst when a major institution or well-known individual, e.g. Brian Williams, messes up. Trust has simply dried up.

## Management doesn't control dialogue


As the Arthur Page Society put it in its 2008 "Authentic Enterprise" publication: "In a world where the tools and relationships of reputation and influence are available to all — the irresponsible as well as the responsible, friends as well as foes — the identity and definition of an enterprise is subject to far less control than in the past."

Social media, in particular, has dropped the hammer on top-down communication. That's how Brian Williams' lie was found out; a fellow helicopter passenger tweeted that the anchor's memory was faulty. And that's why Amy Pascal was canned as Sony Pictures co-chairman; her mindless tweets were exposed by North Korean hackers.

As a consequence of this one-and-done reality, any counselor practicing in this brave, new public relations environment must consider rethinking reputation as a principal challenge. ○

NOW FEATURING  
SATELLITE MEDIA TOURS

The Nation's Premier Public Relations, Communications,  
and Strategy Firm Specializing in Radio and Television




## Strauss Media STRATEGIES

Radio • Television • Social

Celebrating 19 Years of Achievement in 2014  
as the Broadcast PR Industry Leader

- Radio and Television Satellite Media Tours With Strategic, Targeted, & High-Level Results
- Established Relationships with Radio & Television Outlets in All Major Media Markets
- Expertise Includes Public Affairs, Healthcare, Technology, Entertainment, Sports, Spanish-Language, African American, & More
- Best Customer Service & Most Thorough Reports in the Industry
- Audio News Releases: Largest Distribution Network & Most Premium Guaranteed Placements
- National Contacts Include: CBS Newspath, CNN, CNBC, Fox News Edge, NBC News Channel, MSNBC, The Today Show, & Many Others
- Other Services: Actualities, Advertising, Audio & Video Podcasting, Promotions, On-site Event Coverage, & PSAs


Call Us Toll-Free at (888) 638-0220  
For Your Next Satellite Media Tour or Next Radio Project  
[www.straussmedia.com](http://www.straussmedia.com)



**WASHINGTON, DC:**  
National Press Building  
529 14th Street, NW  
Suite 1163  
Washington, DC 20045  
(202) 638-0200  
[info@straussmedia.com](mailto:info@straussmedia.com)

**NEW YORK:**  
262 W 38th Street  
Suite 803  
New York, NY 10018  
(212) 302-1234  
[newyork@straussmedia.com](mailto:newyork@straussmedia.com)

**LOS ANGELES:**  
(855) TV-RADIO  
(626-794-1350)  
[losangeles@straussmedia.com](mailto:losangeles@straussmedia.com)





# What is your PR firm worth?

By Richard Goldstein

For those of you who follow this column, in June 2014 I authored a piece titled “Navigating mergers and acquisitions in PR.” The column reviewed the current market place, why PR firms are selling, why small firms may need to sell to larger players, age as a factor in selling, and what the next generation of deals will focus on. If you do not have access to this column, please send me an email and I will forward it to you (rgoldstein@buchbinder.com).



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

This column is a follow up. The reason I decided to write it this month is that I read a recent column written by Art Stevens, APR, Fellow PRSA, and Managing Partner of the Stevens Group titled “Value Proposition: Are PR Agency Valuations Worth the Time and Money?” It reminded me that Rick Gould, Managing Partner of Gould+Partners, wrote a piece titled “The PR M&A Marketplace — What is your PR Firm Worth?” Finally, Al Croft also discussed this subject in his book “Managing a Public Relations Firm for Growth and Profitability.”

For the record, I consider Rick and Art my friends (Al Croft is no longer with us), and my purpose is not to arbitrate their different points of view, but to give you information to make your own decisions that will allow you to better navigate the merger and acquisition waters with confidence.

## Rick Gould

According to Rick, valuing a PR firm is a complex process. It takes financial expertise, knowledge of the M&A marketplace and how buyers create offers/terms sheets. These term sheets can include the following factors:

- Adjusted operating profit for the past three full years plus current interim period operating profits.
- Net Revenue (fees plus mark-ups) growth for the same periods.
- Net worth of the firm.
- Working capital (current assets less cur-

rent liabilities) position as of the sale date.

- Other intangible factors such as second tier management, quality of staff, quality of clients, office lease, client contracts in place, what percent the largest clients comprise of the total portfolio and other factors the buyer deems important to the transaction.

The buyer will determine a price based on the factors outlined in the term sheet. However, there is not a cut and dry statement that can be made as to how the buyer comes up with a price and terms. It is critical that the firm preparing the offer price for the buyer be experienced!

According to my own experience, PR firms are not frequently valued at a multiple of net revenues. However, that is not to say that deals are not based on “revenue.” It seems to me that a “revenue” deal is more likely when a buyer can incorporate the seller into its own “shop” to better control overhead or the seller is viewed as “strong” competition that the buyer would like to eliminate. In a revenue based model, the seller’s main function will be to bring in quality business. The buyer will manage and be responsible for the operating profit. This is a good model for a “confident” rainmaker, but has not been profitable due to poor staffing, lack of capital, excessive overhead, losing pitches due to being too small, etc.

When I’m asked by a firm what I feel the agency may be worth, I generally use as a benchmark a multiple of profitability. Therefore, assume a \$4 million firm has 20% profitability (EBITDA: earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation/amortization), the possible transaction price may approximate \$4.0 million more or less using a five multiple but subject to my prior discussion on term sheets (note: this came out to one times revenue, coincidentally). Depending on the seller firm, the seller may get 20% to 35% down at closing with the balance paid over four or five years based on performance — an “earn-out.” According to Rick, often a sliding scale is created, where the multiple may be less or more if certain goals are met regarding top and bottom line growth. An earn-out can be described as a deferral portion of the purchase price which is conditional on the seller’s achievement of predetermined operational or financial goals within a specified time frame.

Will the revenue method overtake the

multiple method? I have no idea! However according to Rick, two things should be considered by sellers:

- Have a valuation completed by a qualified appraiser, knowledgeable in the industry, with the appropriate professional credentials.
- Have experienced representation using professionals that know and understand the PR M&A marketplace and the nuances of firm valuation and deal structure.

## Art Stevens

Art’s column takes the view that selling a PR firm is somewhat similar to selling a house or, for that matter, a car. I happen to agree with him. Before you sell your home you get an appraisal by a qualified broker or try and determine what homes similar to yours are selling for in your neighborhood. No different for a car. You may use Edmunds or similar websites to determine value. Problem is you may be surprised that the price you arrive at is not the final selling price.

When it comes to a PR firm, a seller may go to a CPA firm to review a long list of intangibles, including an analysis of past and present financials, profitability, and client stability including the caliber of employees and “goodwill.” According to Art Stevens, the fee for this service can range from \$7,000 to \$12,000, sometimes more! (According to Gould, the fee for a valuation should range from \$3,500 to \$5,000 unless there are extraordinary circumstances. Bottom line is, get a fee quote from more than one appraiser.)

Art asks the question: How “valuable” is this written valuation? Valuation in hand the seller decides to test the waters of the PR marketplace. Assuming the CPA firm valuation is \$3.5 million; the seller goes to his/her employees and offers to sell at this price. Not having the resources to purchase, the employees offer \$2 million to be paid over 20 years. The seller declines because valuation in hand states he or she should get \$3.5 million.

Turning to the marketplace one buyer offers \$2.8 million over three years. The seller then tells the buyer he has a valuation of \$3.5 million. The seller’s response is that his/her advisors disagree!

Does the seller say I cannot accept \$4.0 million because my firm is only worth \$3.5 million (I know you know the answer here!)? Like a television series, the answer, and more, will come next month! ○



**Art Stevens**



**Rick Gould**

# Lawyers belong on crisis teams

By Arthur Solomon

**P**R crisis specialists, the self-anointed Merlins of our business, and their common antagonists, lawyers, have had a few exceptionally busy years protecting their clients.

The PR side has often blamed lawyers for watering down good crisis strategy. But if ever a company needed law advice it is GM, which despite its PR efforts to reposition itself, still receives negative news coverage when attempting to show its good side. And the banking industry is only a step behind the once celebrated automaker. Also, showing



**Arthur Solomon** was a Senior VP at Burson-Marsteller. He contributes to PR and sports business publications, and is on the Seoul Peace Prize nominating committee.

the inability of crisis specialists to stem bad press is MSNBC's revisiting the BP Gulf oil spill once again, proving the axiom that only the media can decide when to stop negative press. In its attempt to cast their magical spell on clients, many crisis pros feel only they have the answers on how to handle a PR crisis.

While techniques have changed, one tenet of crisis PR is still constantly echoed: don't let lawyers ruin your crisis communication efforts. I've long been an outlier on the subject of lawyers being an integral element of crisis PR situations. That's because I've always believed that despite the best PR crisis communications efforts, negative coverage will continue until the media turns to other subjects.

And more important than gaining some positive coverage for clients under duress is to make certain that nothing is done to place them in deeper legal trouble. That's where lawyers come in. They, better than PR people, understand the legal traps. Some are also proficient in communica-

tions. PR people should welcome lawyers in crisis situations. That's because top client management is much closer to their legal staff than to PR agency personnel.

In my opinion, the client's legal staff should also review every step that PR people want to take during a crisis. Before preparing statements for media release, PR people should have them cleared, but not dictated, by the client's attorney.

Too often the PR crisis team's initial impulse is to distribute a client message ASAP before all the facts are analyzed. That's a deficient plan that can create more harm and media distrust as new details about the problem emerges.

Lawyers should play an important role in constructing and controlling the strategy of a PR crisis team and decide what, when and how information to the media will be released.

Advice from lawyers in big-ticket PR crises can't prevent the flow of negative articles, but neither can the PR crisis team. But lawyer's advice may prevent new legal issues for the client by making certain that lawyer-client privilege is not damaged.

Perhaps the most important role that a crisis PR team can play is to help a client craft a boilerplate statement that sounds caring and newsy, make certain that all comments from company officials are cleared internally before being issued, decide when announcements should be made and who should make them, filter media requests to make certain they reach the proper spokesperson(s), identify key allies and seek their support, know which media will be fair and which to avoid, be able to craft a fast response to media reports containing inaccurate information and to create a pro-active PR campaign that can be implemented immediately after the media decides the bad news story isn't worthy of further 24/7 coverage.

It's also important that a savvy PR account group should be aware of a client's soft underbelly prior to crafting a crisis plan. Corporate attorneys can identify past problems that might again gain the media's attention when preparing a crisis plan.

Have lawyers helped troubled companies from worsening their legal problems? I'm sure some have and some haven't. But it often comes down to what's more important: getting good press for a client or preventing a client from digging a deeper legal hole for itself. To me, the answer is a no-brainer: lawyers should be active partners in crafting aspects of PR crisis plans. ○



Lights...  
Camera...  
Audience!

What happened to Action?

Everybody delivers action, but

**Nobody delivers audiences like we do!**

For your next PSA or other media project contact

TV Access @ 800-944-9134

TV  
access

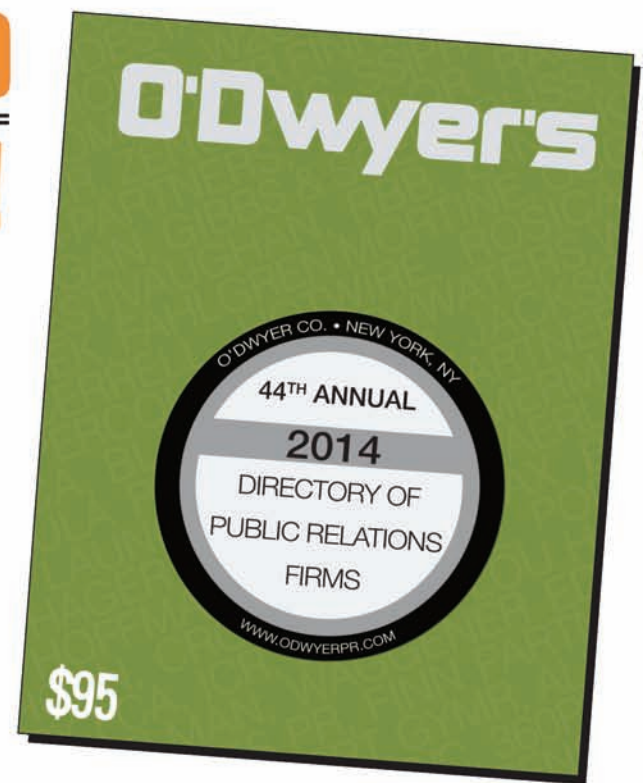
A DIVISION OF FILMCOMM



# ORDER THE ONLY PRINTED DIRECTORY OF PR FIRMS!

O'Dwyer's is the #1 source for researching public relations firms and outside PR counsel. We've been connecting clients and PR firms for 44 years through our directory of PR firms.

**You get quick access** to large, medium-sized, and small PR firms and even experienced freelancers who work out of their homes. Whether you seek a long-term, worldwide relationship or need extra help on a project, **O'Dwyer's Directory is the place to shop.**



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

- ✓ *Has brought billions of dollars in business to PR firms.*
- ✓ *Authoritative industry rankings, based on CPA statements, tax returns.*
- ✓ *Firms ranked by 14 geographical regions in the U.S.*
- ✓ *Leaders ranked in 12 specialized categories: agriculture, beauty & fashion, entertainment, environmental/PA, financial, food & beverage, healthcare, home furnishings, professional svcs., sports/leisure, technology and travel.*
- ✓ *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.*
- ✓ *Cross-Client Index: O'Dwyer's Directory of PR firms is the only place you can look up a company and determine its outside counsel.*

*"O'Dwyer's Directory of PR firms is the finest source of information on PR firms."*

- Howard Rubenstein, President  
Rubenstein Associates

*"The O'Dwyer Directory is an excellent tool when searching for outside PR counsel."*

- Art Stevens, Managing Partner  
StevensGouldPincus LLC

*"Up-to-date, indispensable resource. Saves time and money. Every PR pro should have one."*

- Robert L. Dilenschneider  
The Dilenschneider Group

*"A phenomenal job-seeking aid."*

- Marie Raperto  
Cantor Integrated Marketing Search

*"Single most important source of information on PR firms."*

- Thomas L. Harris, Author  
*Choosing and Working with your PR firm*



## Pentagon considers replacing Spokesman with civilian

Newly minted US Secretary of Defense Ash Carter is mulling whether to install a civilian spokesman to replace the departing Rear Adm. John Kirby, who has been the uniform-clad PR face of the Pentagon since late 2013.

The well-respected, 28-year Navy vet Kirby, who is staying on for a few weeks in a transition period, said in his Feb. 18 press briefing that Carter has not yet made a decision about his replacement as press secretary but wants to “revisit the role of spokesman here” and consider “whether it’s appropriate or not to have a uniform up here.”

Asked by the press corps whether it has been uncomfortable to wear a uniform and speak for White House military policies, Kirby said it wasn’t a big issue. “It hasn’t — it just hasn’t been a big problem for me,” he said. “And I don’t know whether that’s because of my experience here in the Pentagon, or whether it’s because that I’ve known all of you for so long and you know where I can’t go, I think it’s probably a combination of that.”

*The New York Times*, citing unnamed administration officials, said Carter wants a civilian in the chief Spokesman role. ○

## Ex-White House Spokesman Carney joins Amazon

Former White House Spokesman Jay Carney has joined Amazon as Senior VP to head its newly former Global Corporate Affairs department.

The one-time *Time* journalist joined Barack Obama’s team as Press Secretary in 2011, taking over for Robert Gibbs. He exited the White House in June.

Carney, who was doing political analysis for CNN, reports to CEO Jeff Bezos. He’ll split time between Amazon’s Seattle headquarters and Washington.

Carney also served as VP Joe Biden’s Spokesperson. ○

## Sitrick reps BOA mediator

Sitrick and Company is representing mediator Eric Green as he serves as the independent monitor of \$7 billion of Bank of America’s \$16.65 billion Justice Department settlement to aid struggling homeowners.

Green, who mediated the Microsoft-Justice Dept. anti-trust deal in 2001, released an initial report this week, noting BOA has forgiven about \$12 million in mortgage principal from 100 underwater homeowners, worth a credit of about \$9 million against BOA’s \$7 billion consumer relief tab. He called his initial examination a “test drive.”

New York-based Thomas Mulligan and Angela Pruitt of Strick rep Green on the PR front. Green is a principal of Boston mediation firm Resolutions LLC.

BOA has until Aug. 31, 2018 to provide the \$7 billion in relief via loan modifications, new loans to low and moderate-income borrowers, and donations to community reinvestment efforts, among other avenues. ○

## Maryland eyes medical pot PR

Maryland’s medical marijuana commission is calling for proposals from PR firms to educate the public and key players as the state prepares to open the industry by 2016.

The Old Line State’s Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene hous-



es the Natalie M. LaPrade Medical Marijuana Commission, named after the mother of a state legislator. An RFP released today calls for a year-long, \$25,000 communications strategy contract overseen by MMC Executive Director Hannah Byron.

Maryland will charge license fees to 15 growers (\$125,000 each) and an unspecified number of marijuana dispensaries (\$40,000 each), among the highest such fees in the nation to make the program self-funding.

The commission will seek a PR advisor to inform and educate the public about medical pot, keep stakeholders like growers, dispensaries and doctors in the loop, and develop an overall PR plan. ○

## Waxman joins son in PR

Retired Rep. Henry Waxman, who stepped down after 40 years as a prominent liberal voice in Congress in 2015, has joined his son’s PR firm, Waxman Strategies, as Chairman.

PR veteran Michael Waxman opened Waxman Strategies in 2013 after senior stints at Hyde Park Communications and Fenton. Previous stints included Charter Communications, FleishmanHillard and Falcon Cable TV.

Waxman Strategies, which has four key staffers, has worked for veterans advocacy group DAV, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, accounting firm Baker Tilly and financial transaction technology company UC Group.

*Legal Times* reported that Waxman had shopped his services to K Street law firms but balked at work that would contradict his career as a progressive. That publication noted “Waxman’s resume read like a hit list of corporate America.” ○



Waxman

## Psaki returns to White House

Jen Psaki is the new White House press secretary, replacing Jenifer Palmieri, who is expected to spokesperson for Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign, effective April 1.

She had been State Dept. spokesperson and traveled to more than 50 countries with Secretary John Kerry.

President Obama said in a statement that he fully trusts Psaki and is thrilled she’s back on his team.

She handled PR for both of his presidential runs.

Before Obama, Psaki was Communications Director for Congressman Joe Crowley and Regional Spokesperson for the Democratic Congressional Campaign. ○



Psaki



## FTI aids rice exporter Amira over “fraud” report

**A**mira Nature Foods, the 100-year-old, Dubai-based packaged rice exporter, is relying on FTI Consulting as it reels from a damaging report by Prescience Point Research Group alleging phony revenue and export figures.

The Prescience Point report has sparked a shareholder class action and plummeting stock price. Amira on February 10 blasted the research report as containing “false, factually inaccurate and fictional content obtained from previously released false statements, that have been repacked and distributed with malafide intention.” The company said it intends to “pursue this matter legally.”

Prescient Point’s 40-page report, titled “Fraudcap Redux,” dubs the company a “collection of lies with leverage on top.” The report alleges Amira “fabricated” its financials and overstated its Basmati rice sales.

FTI Managing Director Steven Balet is advising Amira on the PR front during the crisis.

Amira went public in October 2012 on the New York Stock Exchange, and the shareholder suit filed in February alleges the company inflated its revenue to boost that stock offering. Revenue for the year ending March 31, 2014 were up 32.3% to \$547.3 million.

Shares of the company are trading around a 52-week low of \$9 in the wake of the Prescient report.

Oppenheimer, which started coverage of Amira in January, said after the Prescient report that the fallen share price undervalues the company and backed its shares as a long-term investment. ○

## Controversial Ecuador filing amended by MCSquared

**M**CSquared PR amended its federal lobbying February 23 to say work for Ecuador to highlight environmental damage caused by Texaco, which was acquired by Chevron, included efforts to counter Chevron’s “PR strategy to harm the reputation of Ecuador.”

The Brooklyn-based firm also disclosed additional fees of \$3.6 million for non-registrable activities connected to the global PR campaign.

MCSquared in June disclosed it had been hired at \$6.4 million for the one-year PR campaign to bolster Ecuador’s image in the U.S. and Europe. The country has been waging an epic legal struggle with Chevron over a \$9 billion-plus pollution lawsuit.

MCSquared says it visited more than 90 contaminated sites; invited celebrities and international personalities to Ecuador and handled trip support (logistics, security, ground/air transportation, catering); arranged press conferences; promoted tourism; prepared video reports in Ecuador, U.S., Central/South America and Europe; bought advertising, and monitored media.

The firm also arranged the visit of Guillaume Long, Ecuador’s Minister of Knowledge and Human Talent, to New School University in New York City.

McSquared, which is owned by Ecuador-born Maria del Carmen Garay, denies lobbying U.S. government officials, but says it engaged in political activity by doing media outreach in connection to President Rafael Correa’s trip to the U.S. in April. ○

### 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).

**Gallagher Group LLC**, Alexandria, VA, **registered Feb. 12, 2015 for Embassy of the State of Qatar** (through Portland PR, Inc.), Washington, D.C., to advise, assist and represent the Embassy of the State of Qatar on U.S. government relations and lobbying efforts, including organizing and conducting meetings with U.S. government officials as needed.

**TwinLogic Strategies, LLP**, Washington, D.C., **registered Feb. 8, 2015 for Embassy of the Republic of Korea**, Washington, D.C., for setting up meetings and communicating policy positions with members of Congress, their staff and administration officials on immigration and visa policy issues.

**Podesta Group, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., **registered Feb. 10, 2015 for Republic of Kenya**, Nairobi, Kenya, to provide strategic counsel on strengthening the principal’s ties to the U.S. government and Institutions. Will also assist in communicating priority issues in the U.S.-Kenya bilateral relationship to relevant U.S. audiences, including the U.S. Congress, executive branch, media, and policy community.

### 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).

**Brand Law Group**, Washington, D.C., **registered Feb. 20, 2015 for Minor League Baseball (“MiLB”)**, St. Petersburg, FL, for labor issues.

**Capitol Knowledge, LLC**, Washington D.C., **registered Feb. 20, 2015 for National Down Syndrome Society**, Washington, D.C., to support biomedical research related to Down syndrome.

**Hettinger Strategy Group LLC**, Potomac Falls, VA, **registered Feb. 20, 2015 for Adobe Systems Incorporated**, San Jose, CA, regarding federal IT acquisition policy, issues related to digital government, and to market Adobe solutions to federal agencies.

**Crossroads Strategies, LLC**, Washington, D.C., **registered Feb. 19, 2015 for Koch Companies Public Sector LLC**, Wichita, KS, regarding issues related to derivative regulation.

**Capitol Counsel LLC**, Washington, D.C., **registered Feb. 18, 2015 for AT&T Services, Inc.**, Washington, D.C., regarding general telecommunication issues.

## 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



**Your Presentation & Media Training Solution**

**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.

## Get O'Dwyer's Newsletter & Magazine plus a year's access to all the content on [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com) for \$295/year

**O'Dwyer's Newsletter**  
The Inside News of PR and Marketing Communications  
271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016  
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-0750  
[www.odwyerpr.com](http://www.odwyerpr.com); [john.odwyerpr.com](mailto:john.odwyerpr.com)

**NEWS CORP CALLS IN EDELMAN**  
Embarked News Corp. has called in Edelman to handle fallout from its phone hacking scandal that has engulfed in British operation.  
The No. 1 independent PR firm is providing communications and PR counsel to News International's management and standards committee handling the internal inquiry into the hacking of a murdered 15-year-old girl's voicemail, allegations of snooping into the calls of family members of soldiers killed in Afghanistan and victims of the London terror attacks.  
Alex Higg, Edelman's managing director for corporate affairs, and James Landis, managing director for PR, handle the account.  
They report to Will Lewis, general manager of News International, which is responsible for Rupert Murdoch's British papers.  
(More on the News Corp. crisis on page 3)

**THEME PARK OPERATORS SEEK PROPOSALS**  
The Virginia-based, global trade group for amusement park operators is on the hunt for a PR firm with an RFP open through Aug. 3.  
The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions represents the interests of 4,000 individual members from entities like zoos, theme and amusement parks, museums and aquariums.  
The Alexandria-based group, led by new CEO Chip Clary, is looking for media relations support with experience in crisis communications and the travel/tourism PR sector as it proactively engages consumers through the media and reacts to situations ranging from financial, legislative and operational issues. The IAAP wants two on-site staffers to assist in press team and one team member versed in crisis support.  
Colleen Mangione, manager of media relations, is taking pitches with in-person meetings slated for mid-August in Virginia for potential key account personnel. Work is expected to begin in early December.  
Download the RFP at [odwyerpr.com/rfp](http://odwyerpr.com/rfp).

**APCO Worldwide has recruited Celia Mackay**, former communication and partnerships director at the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations, as director of its healthcare practice in Brussels.  
Mackay is a 20-year veteran of the healthcare scene, holding posts at Weber Shandwick, Avenet and Cargill Laboratories.

**F-H SHUFFLES MANAGEMENT DECK**  
Fishburne-Hillman named Jack Modestewski to the newly created position of the Americas post to coordinate activity of the unit chief of regions in the U.S., Canada and Latin America.  
The founding general manager of F-H Chicago also served as COO for Europe and South Africa.  
Modestewski was president of client relations since 2004 with responsibility for F-H's practice groups and strategic planning.  
F-H CEO Dave Senay also topped J.J. Carter, GM/Sen Francisco, to the U.S. western president slot. Nancy Seliger, executive VP and former senior president assumes global client relations duties. Bob Winslow, managing director for global technology, is now in charge of F-H's more than 30 practice groups and new product development.

**CHINESE RINGS UP HEALTHCARE DEAL**  
Chime Communications has acquired healthcare specialist Reynolds-Mackenzie for an initial payment \$4M, a package of \$2.5M cash and stock.  
R-M says it generated \$2.4M in revenues last year and earned an operating profit of \$1.2M.  
It's the firm of Alison MacKenzie and Eva Reynolds. The duo counsels clients such as Pfizer, Amgen, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Roche and Medtronic. R-M will be part of Chime's OPEN Health group that was formed in January.  
The acquisition could cost Chime up to \$11M based on R-M's performance. Lord Bell's operation retains the right to pay up to a quarter of that contingent comp in newly issued shares.  
Chime is parent of Bell Pottinger.

**DISCOVERY BAY DISCOVERS MWV**  
Discovery Bay Games, the Seattle-based company that produces games, apps and accessories for Apple's iPad, has selected MWV Group as agency of record.  
DBG is developer of Duo, the first integrated device for iPad. Duo makes it possible for multi-person games such as "Smithsonian Artifact or Fiction." MWV is to position the client as the top brand of games "appreciators" for the Apple tablet.  
Craig Olson, CEO of DBG, said it hired MWV for its "proven record of crafting communications programs that directly influence the bottom line."  
DBG becomes part of MWV's consumer tech practice with Nanusong, Nilson and Celestino, among others.

You'll get the news first in the eight-page weekly O'Dwyer letter, the "bible" of PR according to the *New York Times*--tips and stories that can lead to jobs, new accounts, media placements--sent as a PDF to your inbox every Monday afternoon.

Plus, you'll have access to all the news and commentary posted daily on PR's #1 website, [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com), which has over 10 years of searchable content and O'Dwyer's exclusive database of RFPs for PR services.

O'Dwyer's magazine, now in its 28th year, examines a different area of PR each month. Issues include practice-area specific feature stories as well as profiles of PR firms with strengths in the focus area. The agency profiles constitute the ideal starting point for companies beginning their search for PR counsel.

### 2014 Editorial Calendar:

January, *PR Buyer's Guide/Crisis Comms.*  
February, *Environ. PR & Public Affairs*  
March, *Food & Beverage*  
April, *Broadcast Media Services*  
May, *PR Firm Rankings*  
June, *Multicultural/Diversity*  
July, *Travel & Tourism*  
August, *Prof. Svcs. & Financial/I*  
September, *Beauty/Fashion & Lifestyle*  
October, *Healthcare & Medical*  
November, *Technology*  
December, *Sports & Entertainment*



Contact magazine editor Jon Gingerich to profile your firm in an upcoming issue: [jon.gingerich@odwyerpr.com](mailto:jon.gingerich@odwyerpr.com)

**Subscribe/order online at [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com) or call toll free: 866/395-7710**



# Announcing O'Dwyer's CAREER CENTER at [jobs.odwyerpr.com](http://jobs.odwyerpr.com)

**JOB SEEKERS,  
YOUR NEXT  
PUBLIC RELATIONS  
CAREER OPPORTUNITY  
COULD BE CLOSER  
THAN YOU THINK.**



## **Job Seeker Benefits**

- **Access** to high quality, relevant job postings. No more wading through postings that aren't applicable to your expertise.
- **Personalized job alerts** notify you of relevant job opportunities.
- **Career management** – you have complete control over your passive or active job search. Upload multiple resumes and cover letters, add notes on employers and communicate anonymously with employers.
- **Anonymous resume bank** protects your confidential information. Your resume will be displayed for employers to view EXCEPT your identity and contact information which will remain confidential until you are ready to reveal it.
- **Value-added benefits** of career coaching, resume services, education/training, articles and advice, resume critique, resume writing and career assessment test services.

**O'Dwyer's**

[jobs.odwyerpr.com](http://jobs.odwyerpr.com)

Phone: 866/395-7710

[jobs.odwyerpr.com](http://jobs.odwyerpr.com)

POWERED BY  
**JOBTARGET**

# We're all ears.

Peppercomm is all ears.  
When you're talking,  
we're listening. Carefully,  
thoroughly, thoughtfully.

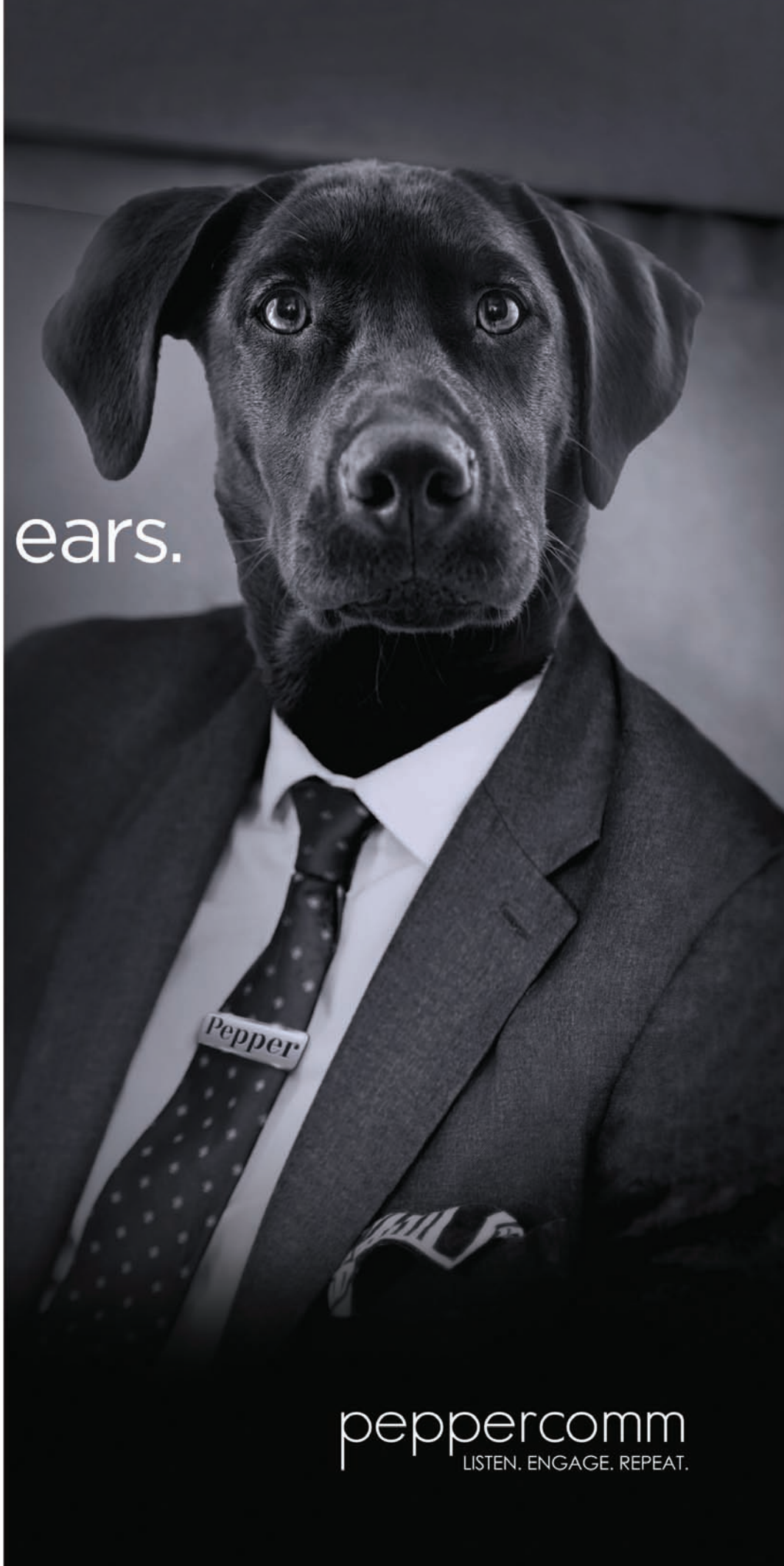
We're listening to you,  
our clients. We're listening  
to them, your customers.  
We're taking it all in,  
letting it marinate, learning  
your customers' language,  
their pain points, what  
makes them tick. Then  
we're engaging with smart,  
creative marketing solutions.

Then we're listening  
some more. Then we're  
adjusting, creating fresh  
solutions, if that's what's  
needed. And that's  
engagement.

Peppercomm is all ears,  
all insight, and real results.

**LISTEN. ENGAGE. REPEAT.**

Give us a shout at  
**[www.peppercomm.com](http://www.peppercomm.com)**.



**peppercomm**  
LISTEN. ENGAGE. REPEAT.