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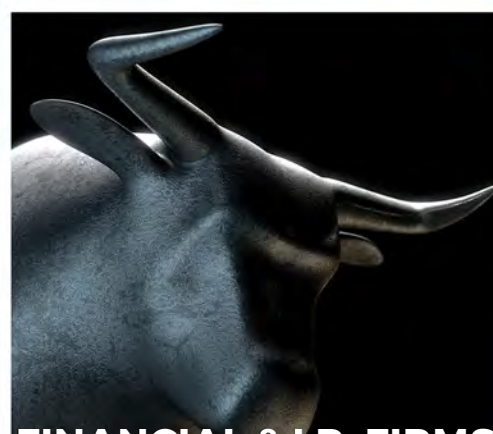
Communications & New Media

May 2023 | Vol. 37 No. 3

2023 RANKINGS ISSUE

PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCIES
RANKED BY NET FEES,
SPECIALTY, REGION & GROWTH

MORE THAN 145 PR FIRMS RANKED
ACROSS 20 INDUSTRY SPECIALTIES



FINANCIAL & I.R. FIRMS
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HEALTHCARE PR
FIRMS RANKED,
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TECH PR
RANKINGS,
PG. 26

PR FIRMS RANKED
BY REGION, PG. 56



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March: Food & Beverage

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Digital news goes bust

A series of high-profile closures in the online news-media world in recent months are eerily reminiscent of the fate that befell their print counterparts almost two decades ago. Despite massive audiences and unmatched influence, the formerly bearish digital news industry that disrupted traditional publishing in the aughts and established media empires in the twenty-tens is now in the midst of a major upheaval.

The New York Times on May 1 reported that Vice Media Group is preparing to file for bankruptcy. The youth-focused media brand, which was valued at \$5.7 billion five years ago and is one of the largest independent media companies in the world, is searching for a buyer after reportedly falling \$100 million short of its 2022 revenue projections. The company, which includes a suite of traditional, broadcast and digital media properties, allegedly turned down a \$3.5 billion acquisition deal from Disney in 2016.

Vice isn't alone, of course. Huffington Post parent BuzzFeed surprised everyone in April when it announced it was shuttering its widely popular news division, BuzzFeed News—which won a Pulitzer and shuttled a brand previously known for listicles into journalistic legitimacy—amid plans to reduce its workforce by 15 percent due to economic challenges. Vox Media, publisher of popular news sites Vox and The Verge—as well as *New York* magazine—announced in January it was laying off almost 10 percent of its staff. Then there was Gawker. The infamous gossip blog, which was relaunched in 2021 by Bustle Digital Group after its original incarnation was sued into oblivion in 2016, folded less than two years after it was revived. The reason? BDG was “reluctantly” forced to lay off eight percent of its workforce after a disastrous first quarter.

While 2022 saw the beginning of a rocky financial period for social media companies, it's becoming clear that 2023 has similarly foretold hard times for the digital news world. Granted, some online outlets have always had trouble monetizing content, but others have been financial behemoths, have earned the adoration of the youth market and seemingly get all the traffic in the world. So, why are so many of our most popular digital brands going bust?

The big reason, of course, is advertising. Companies still recovering from the pandemic have tightened their belts on ad spending in response to an uncertain economy, a declining stock market, rising inflation and increasing interest rates. As ad revenues plummet, the business model that kept the lights on at newsrooms has gone dark. Even digital firebrands like TikTok have downgraded their ad outlook this year.

Our current economic climate has forced budget constraints onto consumers as well, resulting in fewer people paying for digital subscriptions or access to premium content. While the digital-media consumption boom that began during the pandemic continues in the U.S. as well as worldwide, an annual forecast released in April by PQ Media shows that consumers—now facing higher prices on everything from food to rent—have begun to cut discretionary spending on expenditures such as media subscription services.

Another problem is the domino effect these online outlets have felt from the economic fallout that's hit big tech. Tech companies have been laying off employees in droves this year, and much of the venture capital cash that funded these outlets has dried up. A March Muck Rack study found that a lack of funding now accounts for journalists' top worry, and two-thirds now say their work has been affected by economic uncertainty.

Social media's waning influence on digital publishing is arguably even a bigger deal than the larger tech recession. The news industry has always had a bone to pick with sites like Facebook for relying on the content created by newsrooms while sharing none of the ad revenue those clicks generate. But let's face it: these news sites get the lion's share of their traffic from links posted to social platforms—and publishers know it. Facebook stopped promoting news content last year in a bid to tamp down on the amount of misinformation being spread over its platform, and it hit publishers hard. Also, take into account the fact that audiences in recent years have fled sites like Twitter and Facebook for less newsy social options such as Instagram and TikTok, so it's gotten harder for news organizations to reach as many people as they did before. Now that social media platforms are getting out of the news business, digital news organizations are feeling the inevitable pinch.

I'm going to suggest that the end of our social media era of news isn't necessarily a bad thing. Election cycles have proven that misinformation often trends higher than actual news, which means fake news can be monetized more easily than facts. Worse, it can also have more influence. And because gossip, mindless clickbait and reactive outrage copy get the most clicks on social media, these news sites contour their output to meet that demand. Which means we get more garbage content and the quality of our news suffers immeasurably. Now, with the advent of generative AI in newsrooms, you can expect information in the chatbot age to get even worse—if you can imagine that. Maybe it's time for a restart.

In the meantime, I'd like to remind you that it's 2023 and you're reading about all this in a print magazine. ○

— Jon Gingerich

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Companies need to step up healthcare messaging

A report from Edelman suggests that businesses play a meaningful role in improving consumer health outcomes.

By Steve Barnes

Good health is becoming increasingly out of reach for consumers, according to a new report from Edelman, and businesses are seen as having a major opportunity to alleviate the situation.

Fewer than half (46 percent) of the 13,000 respondents across 13 countries that participated in Edelman's "Special Report: Trust and Health" reported being in very good (or better) health. In addition, 52 percent said that there is a significant gap between "how well I am taking care of my health vs. how well I should be"—a 14 percent jump from last year's survey.

The report, part of the agency's 2023 Trust Barometer, found several major factors behind that state of affairs. Inflation (cited by 77 percent) and pandemic restrictions (75 percent) were at the top of the list.

Not surprisingly, inflation's effect seems to be hitting consumers at the lower end of the economic spectrum with the greatest force. While 57 percent of high-income

respondents said they were in very good health, that number drops sharply to 37 percent for low-income respondents.

But several factors that should particularly interest communicators were high on the list as well. Two thirds of respondents (67 percent) said that "lack of trust" negatively impacts their health, with "polarization" (66 percent), "burnout" and "misinformation" (both at 64 percent) just behind.

Another disturbing trend is the continuing decline in the media's status as a source of healthcare information. Globally, just half (50 percent) say that they trust the media to report accurate information about healthcare information, a slide of seven percent since 2019. That level is even lower in the US (46 percent, down 10 percent) and France (34 percent, down 15 percent).

Perhaps because of that more people are providing themselves with their own healthcare information. (A recent M Booth

Health study uncovered a similar trend among Black consumers.) More than four in 10 (41 percent) of respondents to Edelman's survey say they have been increasingly likely to educate themselves about health issues since the beginning of the pandemic and 39 percent are taking more time to verify the truth of the healthcare information they see.

But consumers also think businesses have a responsibility to focus on consumer health. More than eight in 10 (83 percent) said that think healthcare companies should "play a meaningful role in making sure I am as healthy as possible." Those expectations are also high for brands in sectors including food and beverage (77 percent), technology (74 percent), retail (64 percent) and financial services (60 percent).

That can also have an effect at the cash register. Almost two-thirds of respondents (64 percent) said they consider the impact a brand, its products and its business practices have on consumer health when deciding which brands to buy.

The Edelman study was conducted between March 2 and 13. ○

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Consumers apathetic but still want woke brands

Apathy has increased among American consumers, yet they still expect brands to communicate with empathy and to engage publicly with key social issues, according to a recent report.

By Jon Gingerich

Brands operating in the modern world have learned that in order to achieve loyalty and success, they should take a public stand on topical—and often controversial—social issues. But according to a survey conducted by PR and marketing agency Method Communications, those same rules apparently don't apply to most American consumers.

Method's report, which sought to understand the role empathy plays in today's society as well as consumer-brand relationships, suggests that empathy among Americans has suffered a sharp decline.

Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) think empathy in the United States has decreased in the past year. Only 27 percent think the average American is empathetic, down from 54 percent in 2021. More than a third (35 percent) admitted they're disengaged from politics because they feel powerless to make a difference.

That said, Americans still want brands to speak with a degree of authenticity and reliability that connects with them on an emotional level. The report found that more

than two-thirds (67 percent) of Americans say a brand's stance on social issues affects their purchasing decisions, and 47 percent said they want to hear more human-centric stories in the news and from brands. Nearly half (42 percent) said they've stopped purchasing from a brand due to a stance it took on a social issue, while 32 percent said they've purchased something due to a brand's stance.

More than a third (34 percent) said they actively pay attention to brands' stances on social issues so that their spending aligns with their personal values, though more than a quarter (26 percent) of respondents admitted that they still purchase products from brands they disagree with and said they feel guilty about it.

Perhaps in response to this sentiment, three-quarters (76 percent) of those polled said they think society would be better off if people were more empathetic. More than half (59 percent) said they blame politicians for a decline in empathy in America, while 48 percent blame social media and 44 percent blame the news media.

Censorship becomes growing concern

It appears Americans have taken a cue from brands insofar as how they're publicly perceived, as the report suggests that the language we use in our day-to-day conversations has become a growing source of concern among many.

Nearly half (47 percent) of those surveyed admitted they now worry about the words they use every day, and 42 percent said they often censor themselves so they don't accidentally say something offensive or controversial. Only 10 percent said they never worry about their word choices.

Oddly, this sentiment doesn't seem to be evenly applied. Respondents said they were more likely to worry about what words they use in the company of strangers (58 percent) or acquaintances in social situations (51 percent) than they were when around colleagues (43 percent).

Method's report, "Watch your Language: Think Like A Brand, Speak Like A Person," surveyed more than 2,000 Americans in November. Data was collected using market research firm Dynata. ○



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Generative AI and the future of work

GPT is already transforming how agencies and clients operate. What does it mean for the future of the marketing industry?

By Yash Gad and Adam Schwartzman

In Arthur C. Clarke's 1953 short story "The Nine Billion Names of God," two engineers travel to a Tibetan lamasery to help a group of monks list every possible name of God. The monks believe this project will take them 15,000 years. With the aid of a computer, however, they expect to complete the list in 100 days.

Humanity has spent the better part of a century philosophizing, dreaming and fearing the impact advanced technology will have on our lives. Today, it's clear to even the most casual observer: Generative AI has already begun to change the world. ChatGPT stuns users by instantly generating copy on almost any subject, suggesting creative solutions to real-world problems and fixing errors buried deep within complex source code. What does generative AI portend for the future of work? More to the point, will we soon wave goodbye to large portions of the workforce, their jobs forever automated into oblivion?

To answer these questions, we must first clarify terms.

The language of human cognition doesn't apply neatly to generative AI, which neither "thinks" about problems nor "understands" subject matter. Tools like GPT string together a series of words, using a probability model to predict the next word in the sequence. Think of your phone suggesting the next word in a text message or the auto-complete function in a search-engine query.

To improve the AI's predictive capabilities, engineers train these systems on large datasets—think books, articles and webpages full of text—transforming them into Large Language Models. The larger the dataset, the better the LLM's outputs. But what do we mean by better? More truthful? More accurate? In a word, neither. Training a probability model makes it more likely that the next word in any given output will fit logically with the rest of the sequence.

Similarly, the humanlike quality of textual outputs produced by generative AI doesn't indicate that these outputs stem from humanlike intelligence, nor do they imply that humanlike judgment played a role in their construction. Although AI may produce an answer that seems "thoughtful," this impression is utterly misleading. The effect comes not from the expression of reason but from the calibrated application of randomness (labeled "temperature" by GPT). The more randomness applied, the less robotic-seeming—but also, less logical—the output.

These clarifications help us distinguish between what generative AI is and what it's not. Generative AI isn't a rational being capable of forming ideas and opinions. It's a powerful technology that can summon up text, images, code and more, which it accomplishes by replacing truth with logic and eloquence with calculated randomness.

How closely related are logic and truth? Logic is a process used to evaluate the truth value of any given proposition, but it's not a suitable substitute for truth. A conclusion may be perfectly logical but false if built on faulty premises. Tools like GPT have an innate and powerful ability to perform logical calculus, but they can't determine truth from falsehood.

This point can't be overstated: Because generative AI lacks an intrinsic understanding of truth, its outputs must be verified by an external source. Another tool may arise to fill this need for automated truth assessment—indeed, some startups are already working on this challenge—but until then, this responsibility will fall to the user. Woe to the hasty marketer who uses ChatGPT to generate a blog and skips the fact-check, only to discover too late that the AI has built its central thesis on a demonstrable falsehood or misconception.

A wiser content creator might take a piecemeal approach, using one set of prompts to source and organize information (verified against external research, of course) and another to shape the blog's structure, substance and style. Every element of content creation presents its own unique use case for generative AI—from initial brainstorming to formulating a CTA—each with a clear breakpoint at which a human must step in to validate. Especially when it comes to textual content generation, humans must be able to ascertain whether or not the generated output passes logical consistency, factual consistency and speaks with the appropriate tone and voice.

Today's use case for generative AI requires a human to do more than assess the quality and truth value of outputs. At a minimum, it necessitates a human-in-the-loop system in which users play a key role in model refinement. Particularly, when it comes to training LLMs for domain-specific purposes like drug discovery and financial trading, humans must guide the AI by validating or negating its predictions.

Compare generative AI to another world-changing technology, GPS. GPS can

help us tremendously along our journey, but it's worthless without a driver who sets the destination and travels the route. The driver may also choose to deviate from the assigned path; perhaps they'll follow the GPS for a complicated leg of their journey and switch it off when cruising the highway.

So too must generative AI be leveraged by a user who sets the end goal, guides progress along the way and judges when—and how successfully—they've arrived at their destination. The user will determine the ways in which AI can be helpful and the ways in which it may constrain or mislead. A writer may tap ChatGPT to suggest a compelling topic or witty headline and use these outputs as a starting point, rather than prompting the AI to fully conceptualize and generate a final deliverable.

You wouldn't ask a GPS to pick your destination for you. Nor should you look for such guidance, insight or judgment from generative AI. To risk a tautology, human progress—the impetus for generative AI and exactly what it empowers—will always come from humans.

We don't believe tools like GPT will imminently eliminate or greatly reduce the need for a human workforce. As technology advances, job functions and responsibilities will evolve in kind. Already, a new role has emerged, prompt engineer, to train and harness the power of LLMs. Until generative AI can verify truth and validate its own outputs, humans will continue to fulfill these vital roles.

To paraphrase Clarke's third law, generative AI is so technologically advanced as to seem magical. Just as the computer in his short story will aid the monks' project, so too can generative AI speed us toward our goals. Both cases help us see the bottom line: that technology can accelerate our progress but won't replace the conditions that drive humanity. Clarke's great rival Isaac Asimov foresaw this future: "It may be that machines will do the work that makes life possible and that human beings will do all the other things that make life pleasant and worthwhile."

Yash Gad, Ph.D., is CEO and Founder of Ringer Sciences and Chief Data Scientist at The Next Practice. Adam Schwartzman is Head of Content at The Bliss Group. ○



Yash Gad



Adam Schwartzman

A group of children are reaching up with their hands to touch a large, realistic-looking globe of the Earth. The globe is positioned in the upper center of the frame. The children's arms and hands are visible, reaching from the bottom towards the globe. The background is a bright, hazy sky with a sun low on the horizon, creating a lens flare effect. The ocean is visible in the distance. The overall mood is hopeful and collaborative.

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Guiding clients through FDA court battles

How PR leaders can help life-sciences clients navigate the murky waters of FDA court rulings.

By Carrie Jones and Stefanie Tuck

In an unprecedented move, judges are assuming a doctor's responsibilities from the bench, even though they lack medical training or credentials. This development has raised serious concerns about the role the judicial system may have in shaping the government's regulatory authority, particularly regarding the drug and device approval process.

The quickly shifting landscape has left the biopharma industry unsure of how to proceed and looking to PR professionals to evaluate their comfort level for speaking out and provide guidance on the rapidly changing dynamics across this political issue.

We believe as health communicators, it's our duty to guide life-sciences companies with grounded and level-headed advice that embodies three foundational pillars: educating the decision-makers, elevating stakeholder voices and managing risk by scenario planning.

While many news stories are focusing on the conflicting federal court rulings on the abortion drug mifepristone and the ongoing appeals process, biopharma companies are grappling with the implications of any judge having the power to change decisions made by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, both good and bad. They're also considering how best to insert themselves into this charged conversation.

With careful planning and execution, companies can overcome these hurdles while continuing to bring innovative treatments and therapies to patients who need them.

Educating the decision-makers

Decision makers, both internally at biopharma companies and externally at medical associations and advocacy organizations, need succinct, factually-based information before diving into further strategic and tactical planning.

Whether the Texas federal court decision on mifepristone is ultimately upheld or not, the legal implications could have a detrimental impact on the country's ability to evaluate all medications and treatments.

This is exactly why we must prepare top-level executives who regularly converse with their educated government relations team to better understand the situation, how it impacts the industry and what to expect next. This begins by listening to their audiences and translating what we hear into actionable information that executives can share internally and externally.

Despite the FDA indicating medication is safe via market approval, many biopharma companies that make products some might consider "controversial," such as vaccines, stem-cell therapeutics and hormone therapy, could find themselves the target of lawsuits—now with a precedent of success.

Being fully informed of all factual aspects and risk factors will be crucial to ensuring that companies do not make any statements or movements that could be seen as damaging with regulatory bodies and the media covering these developments.

Elevating stakeholder voices

Patient groups, medical associations and academics are recognized as advocating for access to new medicines. However, we're now seeing major biopharma industry organizations join together with companies and key opinion leaders in unwavering support of the FDA's authority. It seems there's a first for everything.

The drug discovery community strongly believes in giving every patient a platform to voice their opinions. We can all agree that patients are instrumental in driving progress. Leveraging media channels to amplify the voices of stakeholders is considered a best practice that aids in understanding how a medication or therapy can enhance their health, well-being and overall quality of life.

As PR professionals, it's our responsibility to advise clients on whom they should prioritize among their stakeholders, when to do so and which channels to use for amplification. While patient perspectives are essential, we must also consider voices such as public health experts, government relations employees, and members of legislative bodies. These stakeholders can play a crucial role in engaging with state and federal representatives to advance policies and legislation that benefit patients.

These stories can be used in multiple ways; we can use targeted op-eds in local or national outlets, visit Capitol Hill to foster positive relationships with Congresspeople, engage with relevant advocacy groups, and use the media to amplify key opinion leaders' voices and bring broad awareness to different audiences.

As PR professionals, we have a responsibility to help our clients engage with all stakeholders who may be affected by this issue, which will likely play out in the Supreme Court. We must help our clients lift the voices of these unheard advocates.

Managing risk by scenario planning

Crisis and scenario planning tend to be time-consuming, meaning we need to drive home to clients why now is the time to think through key specifics so they feel ready to face any contingency the industry might experience. Identifying best and worst-case scenarios allows us to fully prepare for any eventuality and leads to better business outcomes.


In recent years, our biopharma clients have faced mounting pressure to achieve more with limited resources. Given the swift pace at which the mifepristone case is advancing through the legal system, they must now analyze the situation and chart their next course of action. Yes, some clients may be anxious to act. That's why we must help them evaluate the pitfalls associated with impulsive communications and help them develop thoughtful crisis plans.

For the majority of clients, the best approach is to assess the situation thoroughly before making any moves. None of us can predict the future or anticipate the outcome of the high court's ruling.

While the legal battle related to access to medical abortion continues to gain visibility, other related issues persist across the industry. For example, lobbying groups continue to bring lawsuits challenging various portions of federal health involvement—such as questioning the legality of stem cell research and changing what patients have "access" to including cost barriers.

More notably, we've already seen these legal challenges infect our system in another recent court ruling addressing the purview of the Preventive Care Task Force. This showcases just how embedded in our health system judges have become and the power they are wielding from the bench. These issues aren't going away. And it's all happening at lightning speed.

Recently, we've seen a ping-pong of movement faster than we've ever seen before in non-emergency situations. We must help our clients stay focused on the core purpose, mission and values, and we must continue to broadcast the good work they're doing to help patients across the country and the world.

Carrie Jones is CEO and Stefanie Tuck is Vice President with JPA Health. 



Carrie Jones



Stefanie Tuck

The background features a dark blue gradient with a large, stylized, light blue graphic of a hand holding a globe. The hand is positioned on the left side, with fingers curled around the globe. The globe is a lighter shade of blue and has a few small, darker blue dots on its surface. The overall composition is clean and modern.

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Too busy to listen? You may be too busy to succeed

Why effective listening can be a powerful addition to any PR pro's toolbox.

By Peter V. Stanton

The practice of public relations is largely about the delivery of information. Whether through social platforms, traditional media or other means, we talk often about framing the narrative, shaping the message and sharing the content. All of this relates to the one-way dimension of communication—speaking to our target audiences. Where we too often miss an opportunity is when we fail to listen with purpose, interest and empathy.

As someone who studied counseling psychology in college and graduate school rather than public relations, I learned early that listening had the potential to be the most critical contributor to a positive therapeutic outcome. Counselors understand that careful listening engenders trust, builds an alliance for the achievement of a shared goal, and fosters a deeper understanding of what the individual is feeling—the emotions behind their words.

Leaders in psychotherapy all emphasized the importance of listening. Sigmund Freud revolutionized psychotherapy simply by propounding the idea that mental problems could be solved by allowing the patient to talk about them and the therapist to listen. Alfred Adler, originally a colleague of Freud, parted ways to found what he called “Individual Psychology” where even the physical setting in which patient and therapist interacted was redesigned so both could speak and listen as equals. Erich Fromm, another Freud disciple, went so far as to develop six rules for listening which, Fromm argued, “... is an art like the understanding of poetry.”

To be sure, the general importance of listening is not lost on most effective communicators practicing today. They do their listening through surveys, media monitoring and analysis, social monitoring and assessment, and more. Much of this is data collection, statistical analysis and polling. All of these approaches have value, but not as much—as a counseling psychologist might argue—as engaging with an individual one on one. In the toolbox of communication, such interpersonal dialogue must never become the missing link to a successful campaign.

In the development of a solid campaign strategy, the value of interpersonal dialogue cannot be underestimated. The process begins, in our approach to strategy, by listening to our clients. They tell us what is

important to them, and they identify others they feel we may need to hear from. In fact, while we may have preliminary concepts or theories about how we will approach the client's challenge, the process of campaign development doesn't begin in earnest without these dialogues.

The word dialogue is intentionally chosen. We develop a discussion guide, a list of questions or prompts intended to stimulate conversation. But these are never questionnaires that must be fully completed. We allow the conversation to evolve in the direction the individual wishes it to go. A few core ingredients, however, are always included:

- Besides communication itself, what are the “business” goals of the organization? How do you see communication enabling the achievement of these goals?
- What is your definition of success for this campaign? What outcome would you most wish to realize?
- As someone who is deeply immersed in your industry/profession, what guidance do you have for us?
- What should we know as we begin strategic development?
- Who else do you advise us to speak with?

In counseling, such questions are central to what is called “Active Listening,” giving the individual the opportunity to say in their own words where they believe the challenges and opportunities lie. Not only is this important information for communicators to learn and appreciate, it is an essential dynamic in the process of securing campaign buy-in. We reflect back in our strategic plans what we heard and understood from these discussions with key stakeholders. Individuals can see their words and concepts acknowledged in the plan. In this way, they can feel respected and acknowledged. In psychology, this often is called “affirmation,” a demonstration that the individual was not just a box to be checked off, but someone who was genuinely heard.

An interesting dimension of such discussions is the level of emotion that often accompanies personal dialogue. This would never come through in a survey or poll, but often emerges in conversation. Frustration, determination, even anger and uncertainty all have a safe space for expression when the discussion is held on a not-for-attribution basis and the individual is assured we have a real interest in hearing their perspectives.

We do not challenge such feelings. We do not make judgements on their relevance or accuracy. But we do take this information into careful consideration as we formulate a plan of action. The factual information we gain in our discussions with stakeholders is essential. The emotional context and framework in which that information is delivered is of equal, if not greater, importance. If we are to devise a strategy to deal with opposition to a particular position, it helps to first hear and understand how that opposition makes our client feel and, potentially, react in emotional ways. Even if the language of the client has, thus far, been temperate, the underlying emotion affects how it is delivered and received. This shapes our thinking about approach, theme, and delivery method.

This last can be especially evident during periods of crisis. As an example, an electric utility company facing significant and prolonged service interruptions due to storms sought a communication plan to help it articulate what it was doing to improve service. The company's leaders sought a communication plan characterized by creativity, innovation and expediency that would heighten customer awareness of their investments in reliability, and ameliorate customer antipathy. Many ideas were debated. Multiple approaches were conceived. What wasn't initially adopted was a process for listening to customers. To be sure, customers were quoted in the media. And social platform commentary was nothing short of visceral. But the company's leaders were not out in the community demonstrating real interest and empathy.

The strategy that ultimately enabled the company to find its footing began with doing the somewhat unpleasant job of hearing angry people share their feelings. In town halls, focus groups, and direct dialogues with customers, a lot was heard and even more was learned. Among the lessons was that customer anger was not solely related to service interruptions. There were other areas in which customers wanted, and needed, the company to improve. So, while investments in reliability were important and necessary, improvements in daily operations were just as necessary. A telling re-



Peter V. Stanton

— Continued on next page

Inside the mind of a sixty-year-old PR agency CEO

So, you've finally decided it's time to sell your agency. Now what?

By Art Stevens

You've run your agency for twenty-two years and have witnessed considerable gains since the day you started. Your client list has grown as have your employees.

But as the years have passed, you've found yourself working harder because, ultimately, the buck stops with you. You've been forced to spend more time on administrative and back-office matters. You finally protected your liquid assets by taking out professional liability insurance.

Experience has shown you how important it was to initiate non-compete agreements with your account team. And you got through the COVID pandemic by getting out of your expensive office lease and allowing your employees to work at home.

As if this wasn't enough, you also got through your largest account, terminating a long-term relationship because new management had taken over and brought in its own preferred agency.

Whew! Time to catch your breath.

And suddenly, the clock has begun to spin so quickly that you've turned sixty and begun to hum that old Peggy Lee song: "is that all there is?"

You still have a long life ahead of you, and you begin to think about your future. Should you keep doing what you're doing, or is there another option? Then you begin to think about the article in O'Dwyer's written by Art Stevens who wrote about the other option: getting your agency acquired.

You ponder your future. Should you hang in for another five years? Should you sell the agency to key employees? Should you hang on for another five years? Is selling the agency in your best interest? Let's look at each of these three options.

Let's start with hanging in for another five years. The pluses are still worth considering. You get to run your business yourself with no interference from anyone. You can continue to grow your agency as you

see fit. And in five years, you can begin to think of other options. But what if your workload continues to grow? And what if the economy tanks in five years, leaving you with decisions such as how best to downsize, terminate employees and adjust to being a smaller agency? And this means you're now working even harder to bring in new clients, thus extending your workdays. Plus, you're spending less time with your grandkids, spending less time taking vacations and sacrificing other items on your bucket list. And in five years you'll be sixty-five.

So, what about selling your agency to key employees, which would enable you to get to your bucket list a lot sooner? You're fortunate that you have some highly capable number-two people and would definitely entrust the future of the firm to them. But the downside of this option is that you would have to sell the firm at a far lower purchase price to employees than what you would receive in the PR agency marketplace. You discover this very quickly by doing the necessary research.

Another downside is the fact that not all key employees are cut out to be entrepreneurs. It's a decided risk and additional responsibility to own and run an agency than being a senior executive at one. Consider yourself fortunate that you were willing to be an entrepreneur at a younger age than many agency executives are willing.

Which leads to the third option: selling your agency. But let's start with the downsides. If you decide to sell your agency, you will have to report to someone at the buyer's organization. And you haven't reported to anyone—other than your clients—in many years. You're used to being your own boss, which is why you started your agency in the first place.

And because you understood that being in business allows you to run it profitably as its primary beneficiary. If you ran it well,

you personally took home a lot of money which is the primary reward of running your own business. So, if you sell your business you'd need to agree to a transaction that allows you to make even more money.

Another downside consideration is that you wouldn't be able to just leave your agency on the day the deal closes. Most likely, you would have to agree to an earn-out of two, three or four years.

But the advantages to selling are many. With the right buyer, your employees will have an even greater opportunity to grow. They would have security too, because your agency would now be guaranteed to have a long life.

And if the cultural fit is right, they would become part of a collaborative culture with a great emphasis on quality of life.

Moreover, if you choose the right buyer, you will spend the rest of your career in a cultural fit that will make life more comfortable and motivating. The admin and back office drudgery would be taken off your plate, allowing you to spend more time on business development and quality of service.

Your key employees will be rewarded with incentives and greater career opportunities. And you'll be able to see your grandkids more often. I know whereof I speak. Before I began to focus on helping PR agency founders and CEOs sell their agencies, I, too, founded and sold my agency. And since then, I've helped sell other agencies for some seventeen years.

Given my background and experience, I can honestly say that the best option of all for PR agency founders is to sell their agencies to a willing buyer: other agencies, private equity firms and other organizations that value the increasing value of public relations and the agencies who guide it.

Art Stevens is Managing Partner of The Stevens Group. ●



Art Stevens

Too busy to succeed

— Continued from page 14

mark at one of the most vitriolic town halls was when a customer vented his anger and concluded with:

"I really hate your company, but at least you came out here and listened." It was the affirmation needed to reorient and focus

ideas about communication in the interest of customer service.

The words and the act of communication have so much power, so much potential, so much importance in a world where seemingly we have lost the ability to engage with one another. If we can demonstrate a serious commitment to listening, perhaps we can increase the opportunity for reasoned

dialogue and productive discussion.

The simplest, most purposeful thing we can do as communicators is to listen. If we can do this actively, intentionally, and sincerely, we increase our potential to deliver world-class communication that enables our organizations to succeed.

Peter V. Stanton is CEO of Stanton Communications, Inc. ●

Benchmarking agency performance boosts profitability

Actionable data for tracking performance and managing your PR agency with operational efficiency.

By Rick Gould

Gould + Partners pioneered the practice of benchmarking for the public relations industry in 1987. After more than 35 years of in-depth surveys and analysis, we've helped clients evolve their businesses to adapt to changing markets, implement new business practices and apply benchmarking data to ultimately increase profitability and value to their firm. Our annual Financial Benchmarking Report, Billing and Utilization and Industry Growth Report should be an ongoing part of your management toolbox.

If you aspire to create and manage a first-class PR agency, one that not only generates significant profits, but that also creates exceptional firm value, these are the kinds of financial reports you must regularly produce and take into consideration when you make decisions.

Our clients in the PR, creative and digital industries all have a good grasp on running their businesses. Where the benchmarking reports add value is in discovering how their business compares to their competitors. It's a powerful tool that provides actionable data companies can use to increase overall operational effectiveness.

Some key benchmarking benefits:

Strategic goal setting. Conducting benchmarking at regular intervals provides insight into how competitors perform certain aspects of their businesses successfully. With solid data on that performance, you can set measurable goals and implement strategies to meet objectives that will improve your firm's value. It's a good way for firms to look at how other companies in their industry do business and then look in the mirror to make internal changes and shake things up.

Growth opportunities. Benchmarking is effective for spotting new trends and targeting business sectors that have the potential to generate business growth. Understanding where competitors are focusing their efforts to increase profitability and recognizing industry trends is how quality benchmarking and data analysis pays off. Results then steer plans to accelerate performance and position a firm to take advantage of opportunities.

Spot trends in the marketplace. In the PR, creative and digital marketplace, trends in technology and new client services move extremely quickly.

Monitor progress of business goals.

Once the initial benchmarking report is finished and a new strategic plan is in place, the process isn't over. Benchmarking is a great tool to track company performance in specific areas to make sure any deficiencies are being remedied over time. If the gap isn't closing a firm can pivot to a new strategy or dive deeper into discovering where the problem lies.

Create a culture of continuous improvement. Benchmarking offers performance metrics for your employees all the way from entry-level positions to senior management. It helps people get a better perspective on how their job performance stacks up against competitors and even inside your firm. Presenting this data in a positive way can incentivize employees to improve their performance to beat the industry averages.

The key to managing your PR agency to earn a 20 percent or higher operating profit is to set the correct benchmark for your key cost and expense categories.

How to target revenue/cost benchmarks

Net Revenue = 100 percent - Net Revenue is "Fees + Markups."

Direct Labor = 55 percent or less of net revenue.

Operating Expenses = 25 percent or less of net revenue.

Operating Profit = 20 percent or more of net revenue.

While these benchmarks may not exactly describe your agency at present, and there may be structural reasons why you can never get your agency to operate at precisely these ratios in the future, you'll nevertheless find it helpful to set and work toward a "target" net profit benchmark for your company. It's also valuable to realize that if you reduce your firm's labor or operating expenses, you will automatically—dollar for dollar—increase its operating profit.

Setting a target benchmark is useful because it makes thinking about other financial metrics easier. For example, if you set a target operating profit benchmark of 20 percent for your PR agency, it's easy to remember that your costs—no-matter what—should never exceed 80 percent. The minute you let them climb higher than that, you've given up on your goal of netting out 20 percent of revenues.

A critical factor in managing and increasing your PR agency's profitability is how successfully you can control costs. You can't do this at all unless you have a strong grasp

of the essential performance numbers your agency is making, and you can't establish and maintain that grasp unless you obtain reports on and then review your agency's financials each month, or more often.

Which labor benchmarks should you be managing?

Costs are critical in any business, and in the PR business, the single most important category is labor.

To control and improve your agency's profitability, you absolutely must monitor and manage your agency's labor costs more rigorously than any other line item.

The plain fact is that you may not have much day-to-day control over your agency's equipment or office space expenses. But the substantial amount you spend on labor, to produce the PR counsel and the PR services you provide to your clients, is almost always within your direct and immediate control. At most important benchmark is revenue per full-time equivalent "professional." This range should be between \$200,000 and \$240,000, depending on the size, location and specialty of your firm.

In addition, a staff person's available client hours and billable client hours is an equally critical benchmark. The benchmark for average available client hours is around 1,700. If a staffer has 1,700 available client hours and they have 1,500 billable hours their utilization/productivity percent is 88.2 percent (1,500 ÷ 1,700).

With benchmarks like this understood and in place, a professional's ability to command a higher billing rate from clients, or to bill more hours during the year, provides an automatic indication of how big a salary increase they may deserve. Similarly, when agency revenues fall, the benchmarks provide a clear recommendation of how much to cut from the agency's total payroll, if you are to keep revenues and labor costs within the benchmark model ratio.

There are other key operating expenses to track, by the numbers. These include:

Administrative salaries: These should total no more than seven percent of your agency revenues.

Rent and utilities: Try to keep these expenses to six percent or less of agency revenues. If you must spend more, be very sure the reason is a compelling one.

New business: This is a vital function, but



Rick Gould

— Continued on next page

Social influencers are back and brands are benefitting

Strategies to ensure your influencer marketing relationships remain effective and financially efficient.

By Rosalie Morton

Influencers have evolved significantly since they first entered our radar. Remember the early days when mommy bloggers led the way, sharing their content on tweet chats and starting the conversation on content monetization? That was more than a decade ago. Since that time, influencers have gone in and out of favor. Just a few years ago, trust in online influencers was at an all-time low, as many were exposed for padding their follower counts with bots. This led to an initial backlash and some brands distanced themselves from influencer marketing.

But seemingly overnight, we encountered a surge in popularity again with the emergence of micro-influencers. These authentic influencers not only have highly engaged followers, but they're also less expensive than their celebrity counterparts and their content can be easily and effectively used as social media ads.

Here are a few strategies and tactics we use to ensure our clients are getting the most out of influencer relationships.

Always augment with paid. Influencer follower counts aren't important. It's much more important that their content and values align with your brand because you easily can utilize paid media to augment their reach. And social media platforms have ad units that allow you to seamlessly use influencer content as ads. You can use behavioral, geographic and demographic targeting to ensure the influencer's content is reaching your exact audience. For instance, a Europe-based client of ours felt that a specific European influencer would create meaningful content that would help educate and inspire our U.S.-based target audience. Even though the European in-

fluencer had virtually no followers in the U.S., we worked with them and used paid to ensure the content reached our American audience. To this end, it's also critical to ensure that paid usage is included in your contract with the influencer.

Focus on content quality. Since you can use paid to increase the reach of your content, it's even more important that the influencer is creating high-quality, engaging content. Look at the interactions the influencer is receiving. Ensure that they can create content that will inspire your audience to take action. While TikTok and vertical video are enticing content types, don't write off static images, which often outperform when the goal is to drive web traffic.

To maximize authenticity, it's important to choose influencers you trust. Work with influencers to ensure content follows their aesthetic, yet still meets client objectives. There's a risk of over-branding content, thereby losing what makes the content real and effective.

Pitch your influencer content. At first, this might sound like a wild concept: Media will cover content you've paid an influencer to create? But it can work! When we've partnered with influencers to create innovative recipes for clients, we've successfully pitched the recipes to media and generated meaningful earned hits in top-tier national lifestyle publications.

Think about other platforms. Sometimes we've seen clients get stuck relying on tried-and-true ways to reach their audiences. Consumer program? Instagram. B2B program? LinkedIn. This approach can cause you to miss out on emerging platforms. For instance, TikTok has a very active niche group of Excel tips and tricks influencers,

which fits well with an accounting software company we were working with. Previously, that team had partnered only with LinkedIn influencers.

Develop an iron-clad influencer brief.

Your influencer brief is the most important document you will create. It provides your influencers with key messaging—for them to put their own spin on!—brand guidelines, timelines and guidance for the type of content you're seeking. Ensure you include guidelines for proper disclosure, including branded content tags, hashtags and verbiage. Schedule a meeting to walk them through the brief. This helps ensure everyone is on the same page before the influencer gets to work creating content.

Reuse and repurpose. Ensure that you post influencer content from your organization's social media channels. This further aligns the influencers with your brand and extends the reach to your own following and beyond. We find that influencer content is often the highest-performing organic content that our clients post.

Test and learn. Look at what types of influencer content are performing best and utilize this to inform your programs moving forward. Consider which styles and messages excelled in the program and leverage this data to consistently measure and improve.

With these guidelines, your next influencer program will not only be more effective, but it will be more financially efficient—a win-win.

Rosalie Morton is Senior Vice President, Consumer and Channels at Padilla. ○



Rosalie Morton

Firm profitability

—Continued from page 16

should consume no more than two percent of your agency's net revenues. If it costs more than this to bring in new business, it's time to look underneath these numbers to see if you're approaching the right kind of prospects with the right kind of proposals.

Technology: Computers and software are essential for today's successful PR agency. But too much emphasis on keeping up with the latest and greatest information technology can easily allow these expenses to run out of control.

Our "model" PR agency keeps its IT ex-

penses to about two percent of net revues. There's some room for flexibility here, but if this ratio stays too high for too long, management should look behind the numbers to see what's really going on.

What gets measured gets done

Regular review of your firm's performance numbers will accomplish two things:

First, it's well known that whatever indicators you monitor are the ones that improve. What gets measured gets done. So, by monitoring your monthly performance and results, you increase the likelihood of improvement in these crucial areas.

Second, checking your firm's monthly profit and performance on a regular basis

gives you many opportunities to identify a threatening trend in its earliest stages, before it can take hold or get out of control.

The numbers in your P&L are vitally necessary for monitoring your key business ratios and benchmarks. There's a direct correlation of agencies in which management does not regularly analyze operating performance to agencies that are not successful. Certainly, it's possible to operate a PR agency successfully with less than full attention to the numbers. But it's much less likely, compared with agencies that attentively manage by the numbers.

Rick Gould is Managing Partner of Gould+Partners. ○

Humbling and hopeful reflections on Silicon Valley Bank

The SVB meltdown is a reminder that no company is safe from the whims of the market.

By John Hartz

The collapse of Silicon Valley Bank was equal parts shocking, difficult and sobering for anyone impacted by the health of the American financial system. Which is to say, everyone.

Some public relations pros will offer analyses of what may have gone wrong and what can be learned from a communications standpoint. I'll leave that to them. For me, the SVB meltdown had a personal connection and serves as a prompt to reflect on the importance of humility and gratitude in this topsy-turvy business that is the PR world.

The maelstrom of 2023 was, unfortunately, not my first financial crisis. Back in 2008, I was barely ten years into my career with Sloane & Company and representing publicly-traded, multi-state Boston Private Bank & Trust as it navigated a monumental financial meltdown that felt like it might devour the entire global economy. At least that's how it seemed to my inexperienced and anxious eyes.

Flash forward to 2021, long after we'd wrapped up our work on that business. That year, SVB acquired Boston Private, and it became SVB's wealth management arm.

Boston Private has always had a special place in my heart because it was the first client I'd ever identified and won largely on my own—identifying the opportunity, selling it in and leading the work. The company and its people had placed their trust in me and our firm to help Boston Private tell its story and protect the organization. Little did I suspect that only a few years after getting started on a remit to raise Boston Private's profile as it expanded around the country, we'd all be finding our way through an unprecedented economic disaster, charged with communicating effectively and keeping the business going.

For me—and many others connected to Boston Private—the surprise and sadness of the SVB failure was amplified by the fact that it had taken Boston Private—a 36-year-old company that had survived the 2008-09 crisis and seemed like it would be around forever—down along with it. And as I've reflected on this outcome as a PR and business professional, I've been reminded of a few key things.

In the PR field, you often have the opportunity to be at least a small part of big

corporate and historical flashpoints. For me, representing Boston Private during the financial crisis was one of those times.

I recall working with Boston Private leaders as the company navigated the terrifying economic environment. None of it was easy, and I'm sure I didn't fully appreciate the challenges looming over the decision-makers there. How to responsibly work through a crisis at a time when so many were panicking, and no one could foresee the outcome? The question hung heavily in the air every day.

The experience was also a reminder of the fragility of the here and now, and why it's so important to appreciate today. To wit: Boston Private was housed in a beautiful building in the middle of Boston's financial district. It was the former home of the Federal Reserve branch in Boston, built in 1922 in a structure that will probably still be standing in 3022.

We used to have meetings in the old bank vault, an underground chamber protected by a massive—now permanently open—metal door, all of which had been refurbished to serve as a museum of the building's past. Nothing could have felt more solid or stable. But in 2023, we were reminded that no amount of steel or brick can immunize a company from the whims of the market.

It was also a reminder that the market can be indiscriminate. Boston Private worked through the Great Financial Crisis and came out the other side. In addition to serving high-net-worth clients and businesses, Boston Private also became one of the largest lenders in Boston working to issue mortgage loans in low-income areas as part of the Community Reinvestment Act.

When Boston Private was acquired by SVB in 2021, this important work continued, but the meltdown created great short-term uncertainty. Fortunately, it now appears these efforts will keep going, but communities in need—which had nothing to do with SVB's challenges, inflation or the macro interest rate environment—clearly dodged a bullet.

While I can take no credit for steering Boston Private through difficult times, I'm humbled for having had the chance to help out as it happened. And the aftermath of the SVB-Boston Private saga, as sad as it is, is a reminder to be grateful for a career in PR, where we get a chance to help clients when they need it the most.

John Hartz is President at Sloane & Company. ○



John Hartz

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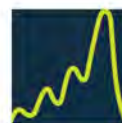
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Shopping for a PR firm? Please read this!

Some common missteps companies make when they begin the search for a public relations agency.

By Henry Feintuch

Like many others in the agency business, our growth is often predicated on responding to and converting RFPs and inquiries into paying clients. It's not a quick or efficient process; sometimes the most complex requests come in cold—with a tight deadline for delivering a comprehensive plan by e-mail—from an intern or lower-level corporate employee who may be communicating with dozens of PR firms. We don't typically participate in those kinds of blind shootouts. They're too time-consuming and we have a business to run.

The far better scenarios are when we're asked to participate in getting-to-know-you or "chemistry" meetings, provide samples of our work and discuss the prospect's business and competitive environment. As the field gets whittled down, negotiations can get underway, references shared or we might be asked to develop a speculative plan or directional outline (though often at our expense and with no guarantee of being retained).

I share the above not as a complaint but as a window into a new business team's challenges. However, there are some questions that emerge during the new business cycle that make my eyes roll into my head and my brain rattle. In the spirit of educating—and hopefully not alienating—would-be clients, here are some of them and our typical responses.

Q: Can you get our company into "fill in the blank": TechCrunch, Wall Street Journal or the New York Times?

A: Perhaps. But save your money in hiring a PR firm if you have just one target you're going after. You should think of a PR firm as your strategic partner in developing a communications strategy designed to support your business objectives and not just a handyman you call in to fix a gutter or paint a wall. It's not how you get real value.

Q: How many placements can you guarantee?

A: While we're at it, how about forecasting the stock market or the weather with absolute certainty? Ethical public relations practitioners can't predict which specific outlets will run a story or how many placements a campaign can engender. What we can do is help you to assess the strength of your business story and the likelihood the media may find it newsworthy. A good PR firm should be able to provide you with

many concepts for a campaign that will reach the individuals you are trying to influence. And if you're putting out valuable, credible, engaging and/or actionable content, the results should speak for themselves.

If the question is not of absolute numbers but of accountability, that opens up a far more strategic discussion between an agency and the prospect. A client has every right to ensure that their agency's efforts and expenditures are measured. In developing and finalizing PR plans for our prospects, we work with our clients to set KPIs or goals for each activity that make it into the final plan—not just measuring media hits but speaking platforms and awards applied for—and later won—industry analyst briefings, trade show briefings, social media growth and more.

Q: Instead of a retainer, can we just pay for successful placements?

A: There are law firms that take cases on a contingency basis and yes, there are some PR firms that operate on a pay-for-performance or success formula. In the PR industry, these types of arrangements shift the focus from strategy and creativity to quantity—not necessarily quality—and open up the opportunity for illicit payments to producers or journalists.

As businesses, most PR firms are compensated for their strategy, planning, execution and results. Focusing just on the results portion of our work puts a disproportionate focus on an outcome that may be adversely affected by client actions, competitive developments, other news and numerous other factors beyond an agency's control. It also devalues our strategic efforts. If an agency fails to deliver agreed-upon results as part of its mandate, and the reason is their lack of effort, creativity or incompetence, they should be terminated.

Q: Have you ever worked for a firm identical to our own?

A: Perhaps, but the expertise of an external communications team relies primarily in its knowledge of public relations and the full toolset available to help clients achieve their business objectives. Past experience and tactics from totally different industries can be extremely useful in relating to a client challenge in a new industry. That's not to say a company shouldn't be looking for an agency with relevant experience—sector

familiarity can be quite valuable to a client seeking agency representation and to avoid having to teach the basics.

Q: Can we test your team out for a few months before signing a more formal/longer-term contract?

A: PR campaigns, depending upon their nature, can easily take several months before results are visible and that doesn't take into account the initial learning curve and infrastructure set-up. In addition, asking an agency to consent to a short-term starter relationship suggests the client isn't sure about its selection process and may not be fully committed to the campaign's success. Better not to hire than to set an artificially short time frame that may ensure failure.

Q: Can you provide a list of reporters you know?

A: This is one of my favorite pet peeves. It's often asked to try and ensure that the agency knows the publications—and journalists—that may cover their company. But there are so many assumptions tied to this seemingly innocuous request that makes it virtually worthless.

First, every agency subscribes to a media database of some sort and can generate a list of reporters in any city or market niche. Secondly, knowing a reporter doesn't guarantee coverage. Sure, journalists get to know PR practitioners who are reputable and deliver reliably. But that doesn't guarantee coverage, which typically is what a prospect is seeking to learn. Thirdly, reporters change beats or organizations with increasing frequency—the days of your "connection" at one publication for 20 years is an interesting historical artifact. And finally, what we believe is the key factor here—it's the strength of the story and the storytelling that rules the day—not which reporter ran a story on a prior client six months ago.

I provide these examples of common missteps in the PR agency vetting process not as a gripe fest, but rather as an attempt to redirect prospective clients' energies down a more positive and productive path. I'd love to hear your pet peeves and constructive examples for improving the process. Forward them to me at henry@feintuchpr.com and I'll round up the most interesting in a follow-up column.

Henry Feintuch is President of tech PR firm Feintuch Communications. ●



Henry Feintuch



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Bureaucracy to blame for government's poor messaging

Professionals who provide communications counsel for the U.S. government widely recognize a lack of public trust in the integrity and veracity of the government's messaging but disagree on what factors are contributing to the problem, according to a study conducted by George Washington University.

By Jon Gingerich

Public trust in the U.S. government has been declining for several years. And the professionals who provide communications counsel for the government think the government itself is partially to blame, according to a national government and public affairs study on trust in government communications conducted by The Graduate School of Political Management at the George Washington University College of Professional Studies.

The national research project, which sought to examine the effectiveness of government and public affairs communications and the amount of perceived trust the public has in the government's messaging capabilities, surveyed government communications practitioners as well as communicators employed by government-associated private sector organizations.

The study found that more than a third (35 percent) of the practitioners think the government is ineffective when it comes to public messaging, while nearly two-thirds (65 percent) characterized the government's communications capabilities as sufficient. Of all the respondents surveyed, 40 percent think the public distrusts the government's messaging, while 59 percent believe the public trusts the information the government provides them.

What's causing this perceived lack of trust in government messaging? A majority cited external factors: namely, the recent rise in fake news and disinformation, as well as a prevailing view that the government's objectives are politically motivated. More than two-thirds (68 percent) believe disinformation is harming public trust in government, while 58 percent said the government is viewed as being politically motivated. Additionally, 59 percent think the recent hyperpolarization in politics, which can limit officials from being able to communicate fair and balanced information, is the reason for the current lack of trust in government.

But the government isn't blameless in all this. In fact, the GW study suggests that the government's current internal processes—which include needless bureaucracy, general disorganization, a history of withholding information and poor social media capabilities—have exacerbated its poor messaging performance, even if external factors are the root of the problem.

More than a third (36 percent) of com-

municators polled said the government has a bureaucratic and outdated approach to communications, which often prevents government agencies and entities as well as government-associated private-sector organizations from getting information out quickly. And 31 percent think government communications are too monolithic and utilize a “one-size-fits-all” approach that doesn't account for regional, demographic and/or socioeconomic differences, which hinders the government's ability to communicate effectively.

More than a quarter (26 percent) of all communicators polled also said they think the government is too slow to share information, 23 percent believe the government's approach is outdated and 19 percent said the government lacks the resources to effectively communicate. An additional 14 percent believe the government has lied or provided inaccurate information in the past, eight percent said the government hasn't effectively mastered the use of social media, eight percent think the person delivering the message isn't trustworthy and four percent said they find the government to be deceptive.

“External factors at the root of the lack of public trust in government are both caused and exacerbated by internal communications challenges,” the study's authors wrote, “specifically an inability to target different groups and excessive bureaucracy, which leads to inefficiency, disorganization, and a slow sharing of information.”

The study discovered a sizable disparity between the two groups surveyed in that communicators who are government employees widely see the government as being effective at communicating with the public (77 percent), while the majority of private-sector communicators working with government clients view the government as being ineffective (53 percent). And while most communicators surveyed admitted external factors such as the rise in disinformation are a primary contributor to the public's lack of trust, government communicators are more likely to blame internal failures—such as slowness, an outdated approach and a lack of resources—for contributing to this phenomenon, while private-sector practitioners are more likely to cite public trust factors.

For example, 29 percent of government

practitioners think the government is too slow to share information (compared to 22 percent of private-sector communicators), 28 percent think the government's comms. approach is outdated (versus 15 percent of private-sector employees) and 28 percent believe the government currently lacks the resources to effectively communicate (compared to only seven percent of private-sector employees).

On the other hand, 21 percent of private-sector employees believe the government has deliberately withheld information in the past (versus 17 percent of government employees) and 24 of private-sector employees think the government has lied or provided inaccurate information (compared to only seven percent of government employees). A third (33 percent) of private-sector communicators blame the government's “one-size-fits-all” comms. approach (compared to only 30 percent of government practitioners).

So, what steps can the U.S. government take to narrow the trust gap and improve outreach with its messaging? Practitioners suggested that government communications can be improved by ditching the monolithic approach, empowering communicators by bolstering education and training programs and examining their own internal processes so it can weed out disorganization, inefficiency and bureaucracy.

More than half (55 percent) of respondents suggested the government should refine its communications strategies and tactics to more effectively reach different groups of Americans. 51 percent said the government should either devote more resources and training for current staff or share information with the public quickly and more regularly. 47 percent highlighted the need to take a stronger stance against disinformation, 33 percent believe undertaking reforms to enhance bipartisanship would improve trust and 26 percent advocate eliminating bureaucratic challenges. Only 13 percent suggested improving the government's social media usage and presence.

GW's “Government Communications and Public Affairs Study” surveyed more than 200 communications professionals employed by the government or government-affiliated private-sector organizations in November and December. ○



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Tech firms saw 3.9% uptick in 2022

PR firms representing the tech sector saw revenues jump last year as retainers and budgets grew among new and existing clients.

By Steve Barnes

Firms that handle tech clients saw an upswing in revenues in 2022, rising 3.9 percent to \$818.6 million in tech-related fees, according to the 2023 *O'Dwyer's* ranking of the top technology PR firms.

However, several of the 78 firms on our list saw not just double, but triple-digit increases in net tech-related fees. Padilla, which came in at #18, racked up \$14.6 million, up 176.4 percent from 2021's \$5.7 million. Other big gainers included Bliss Group, which was up 431.2 percent to \$1.6 million and Wachsmann, with an 81.8 percent jump in fees to \$25.3 million.

Overall, 18 out of the top 20 firms saw jumps in fee income—and 16 of those were at least double-digit increases.

Most of those firms saw pretty healthy gains in terms of staffers as well. No.2 Highwire increased headcount by 46.7 percent, and No. 3 Finn Partners was up by 18.7 percent.

Only nine firms reported dips in fee income.

AI comes full circle at PAN

"PAN was an early agency representing AI brands," said PAN Communications president and CEO Philip Nardone. "While we saw it flatline a bit in past years, it has now come back full circle based on personalization and the need to stay real-time conversational."

PAN's fees were up 24.9 percent in 2022, hitting almost \$25 million. While Nardone said that his agency's "legacy in the space" has been a big contribution to those gains, the agency has also seen "a huge uplift in tech infrastructure (devops, security, cloud, data & analytics), and all things related to commerce (logistics, transportation, supply chain)."



Philip Nardone

That combination led to 33 new clients in 2022, including such brands as Boston Consulting Group, Ware2Go, Aurora Solar, Brightside Health and Thales.

PAN did not open a new bricks-and-mortar office in 2022, but its "virtual office" became the fastest growing one at the agency, accounting for 75 staffers.

However, virtual isn't the whole ball game. "While flexibility is paramount, having that time with our clients in person goes a long way in building rapport, trust and team chemistry. At the end of the day, those are

the core tenets of a strong agency and client relationship," Nardone said.

He also said that as the tech market develops, the power of storytelling becomes increasingly important. "Brand value matters more than ever before. PAN saw an opportunity to be that agency partner that helps tell a cohesive story across channels to support driving more qualified leads and creating an experience to drive demand."

Highwire expands its presence

"Highwire continues to expand its presence in the healthcare technology space," said Highwire Principal Carol Carrubba.

Taking the #6 spot on our tech list, Highwire brought in \$34 million in net tech fees, for an overall jump of 16.3 percent. And a big part of that growth was due to healthcare. "The numbers speak for themselves," Carrubba said, "In 2022, Highwire's healthcare practice grew by 46 percent, gaining seven new clients."

Highwire's digital capabilities also played a big part in its success. The agency's digital practice "drove 61 percent of the agency's organic growth, grew 75 percent year-over-year and is an instrumental pillar in nearly all of our new business wins."

Carrubba said that prioritizing the agency's people was also a major focus. Highwire joined the Diversity Action Alliance in 2022, and "continues to commit itself to its people, culture and DEI, seeing notable growth in diversity."



Carol Carrubba

With offices in San Francisco, New York, Boston and Chicago, Highwire expanded to include employees in 14 new states over the past year. To integrate its hybrid workforce thoughtfully and inclusively, it initiated a monthly "Stay Wired Office Opportunities Program," aka SWOOP, when employees are encouraged

to come into their nearest office for career, culture and client connections including team building, training, social events or in-person meetings.

In September, Highwire secured a strategic investment from Shamrock Capital, a Los Angeles-based investment firm specializing in media, entertainment, communications and related sectors, which will enable the agency to expand its healthcare practice through strategic additions, as well as further develop its digital marketing, data analytics, public affairs and corporate communications capabilities.

Clarity confronts a leaner environment

"2022 was the year in which we made a decisive move towards becoming a truly integrated agency," said Clarity CEO Sami McCabe. "As marketing and communications budgets get leaner, our agility and ability to be more than just a comms partner really enabled us to rise to the challenge that the current environment presents."

Clarity, which came in at #14 with almost \$17 million in net fees, saw the past year as an opportunity "to expand into some categories we historically haven't focused on, including cleantech and Web3. We also doubled down on those sectors that have long been important for us, including fintech and consumer tech."



Sami McCabe

The agency also launched Atrium, a venture studio dedicated to investing in and developing new technologies, and brought in such new clients as Fin Capital, Bullpen Capital, Exclaimer, and Red Hat.

Due to changes in the tech environment, McCabe said, "client engagements might start with a heavy focus on PR, but we're seeing campaigns rapidly morph into a more integrated approach."

For the coming year, McCabe said that "we see clients increasingly looking to consolidate their agency roster and centralize capabilities and geographic market expertise with one agency partner—both for cost efficiency reasons, and because clients want truly joined-up execution across borders and across channels."

Client sectors that Clarity is bullish on include fintech, media and entertainment, broader B2B tech, as well as emerging spaces such as sustainability, privacy, web3 and AI.



O'Dwyer's technology PR rankings, pg. 26

Continued on page 34



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RANKINGS OF FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN TECHNOLOGY

Firm	2022 Net Fees	Firm	2022 Net Fees
1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$224,795,000	40. Bliss Group, The , New York, NY	\$1,621,663
2. Hotwire , New York, NY	59,715,022	41. Rally Point Public Relations , New York, NY	1,599,093
3. Finn Partners , New York, NY	51,600,000	42. Firecracker PR , Brea, CA	1,500,000
4. ICR , New York, NY	37,723,092	43. CommCentric Solutions, Inc. , Tampa, FL	1,416,120
5. Zeno Group , New York, NY	37,587,559	44. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	1,350,075
6. Highwire PR , San Francisco, CA	34,007,410	45. Landis Communications , San Francisco, CA	1,128,000
7. Walker Sands , Chicago, IL	30,502,958	46. Virgo PR , New York, NY	1,100,000
8. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	29,230,000	47. 360PR+ , Boston, MA	1,032,000
9. Hoffman Agency, The , San Jose, CA	26,344,000	48. Tier One Partners , Boston, MA	1,012,849
10. Wachsman , New York, NY	25,371,403	49. Feintuch Communications , New York, NY	1,000,894
11. PAN Communications , Boston, MA	24,869,766	50. Berk Communications , New York, NY	788,767
12. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	23,600,000	51. Bellmont Partners , Minneapolis, MN	731,160
13. Inkhouse , Waltham, MA	17,487,677	52. Havas Formula , New York, NY	704,047
14. Clarity , New York, NY	16,972,073	53. Superior PR , Chicago, IL	688,265
15. Bospar , San Francisco, CA	16,949,211	54. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	639,538
16. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	16,400,000	55. Milk & Honey PR , New York, NY	569,866
17. MikeWorldWide , New York, NY	16,138,813	56. Stanton Communications , Washington, DC	475,850
18. Matter Communications , Boston, MA	16,137,000	57. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	431,591
19. Padilla , Minneapolis, MN	15,874,093	58. Pugh & Tiller PR, LLC , Annapolis, MD	394,191
20. Merritt Group , McLean, VA	14,638,103	59. Comms. Strategy Group (CSG) , Denver, CO	386,451
21. Hunter , New York, NY	14,600,000	60. BizCom Associates , Plano, TX	360,000
22. Fahlgren Mortine (includes TURNER), Columbus, OH	10,075,150	61. Beehive Strategic Communication , St. Paul, MN	352,694
23. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	8,785,000	62. Champion Management Group , Dallas, TX	285,978
24. SourceCode Communications , New York, NY	8,475,000	63. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	282,500
25. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	8,230,000	64. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	260,780
26. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	7,494,261	65. Red Thread PR , Philadelphia, PA	256,827
27. Crenshaw Communications , New York, NY	5,536,338	66. Greentarget Global LLC , Chicago, IL	214,000
28. V2 Communications , Boston, MA	5,371,178	67. Slide Nine Agency , Columbus, OH	211,762
29. TruePoint Communications , Dallas, TX	4,724,825	68. BoardroomPR , Fort Lauderdale, FL	200,000
30. Idea Grove , Dallas, TX	3,824,623	69. Hoyt Organization Inc., The , Torrance, CA	200,000
31. Treble PR , Austin, TX	3,586,231	70. BLAZE , Santa Monica, CA	155,749
32. Alloy , Atlanta, GA	3,467,326	71. Fish Consulting , Fort Lauderdale, FL	141,000
33. Kiterocket , Phoenix, AZ	3,255,278	72. Buchanan Public Relations , Bryn Mawr, PA	118,820
34. Karbo Communications , San Francisco, CA	3,155,705	73. Zapwater Communications, Inc. , Chicago, IL	82,150
35. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	2,750,000	74. Marketing Maven Public Relations , Camarillo, CA	76,557
36. Standing Partnership , St. Louis, MO	2,557,852	75. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	60,629
37. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	2,348,548	76. Lavidge , Phoenix, AZ	32,035
38. Kivvit , Chicago, IL	2,244,061	77. Judge Public Relations , Tampa, FL	23,075
39. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	1,753,739	78. Public Communications Inc. , Chicago, IL	17,781

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Financial firms charted historic gains in '22

O'Dwyer's interviewed executives at some of the top-ranked PR agencies representing the financial services sector to find out what the future holds, as a series of recent bank failures that have rocked the finance world now threaten agencies' post-COVID growth plans.

By Jon Gingerich

Nine of the top 10 firms ranked by *O'Dwyer's* for financial PR and investor relations charted growth in finance-related fees last year. In total, the top 10 firms accounted for \$377 million in net fees in 2022, an \$86 million leap from their performance in 2021 and more than three times the \$25 million in total gains the top ten firms charted between 2021 and 2020. The numbers alone paint the picture of a communications landscape moving into uncharted territory.

Unfortunately, 2023 hasn't kicked off without a few stumbling blocks. Stubborn inflation, never-ending stock-market woes and ongoing banking-sector turmoil in the wake of the First Republic Bank and Silicon Valley Bank collapses, which were the second- and third-largest bank failures in United States history—as well as the largest since the '08 financial crisis—all threaten to derail financial PR firms' momentum just as they were shifting into post-COVID plans for growth.

We asked executives at some of the top-ranked firms meeting the communications needs of financially-focused companies what they attribute last year's success to, and what trends, changes and challenges they see on the horizon, as we move into what's shaping up to become an economically uncertain year.

Prosek picks up PE, special-situations business

One of the strongest gainers in *O'Dwyer's* financial/IR rankings this year came from Prosek Partners, which pulled in more than \$76.8 million in finance-related net fees in 2022 to reveal earnings nearly \$7 million higher than 2021's \$70 million. The New York-based financial communications shop, which was founded in 1990, holds the number-three spot in *O'Dwyer's* financial rankings.

Prosek's performance in 2022 signaled a continued trajectory of growth for the firm, as the agency's 2021 earnings boasted gargantuan 30 percent gains from the year prior.

Founder and Managing Partner Jen Prosek attributed the agency's success to a financial services sector that remains healthy and dynamic as well as an ongoing evolution in what she referred to as the "emerging market of marketing."

"Private-markets firms within the financial services world now understand the power of brand and are investing in communications, marketing, branding and digital like never before," Prosek told *O'Dwyer's*.

Prosek said the special-situations work generated from these same firms and their portfolio companies has also increased.

Looking to the future, Prosek expects the finance sector will continue to invest in "offense" brand building, as leaders in the financial services sector now believe in—and compete on—branding. And communications agencies servicing the financial services world stand to see budgets increase as a result.

Prosek also believes fundraising for private markets firms will grow increasingly competitive, and U.S. firms will find themselves competing for capital both inside and outside of the country. She also expects that large corporate financial institutions will likely experience layoffs and will require capable communications teams to handle these shakeups.

"Increased volatility in the economy will create more special situations work (e.g., restructuring, crisis communications, etc.), so firms with strong strategic corporate comms., investor relations and special situations capabilities will experience growth," Prosek said. "Employees, culture and talent will continue to be a top concern, and firms will continue to invest in these areas."

Vested benefits from unique value proposition

Financial services specialists Vested took

in nearly \$24 million in finance-related net fees last year, accounting for gains of more than \$6 million from 2021's \$17.5 million. The firm, which is focused exclusively on the financial services industry, now takes the number-four spot in *O'Dwyer's* financial rankings this year, up from number five last year.

Vested Group CEO Binna Kim attributed the firm's impressive year to a continued signing of marquee financial brands across asset management, banking, capital markets and fintech sectors for whom the agency led strategic programs in areas such as corporate communications, branding, advertising, digital marketing and content.

"Financial brands are increasingly demanding the specialist knowledge, integrated expertise and creativity that Vested is uniquely positioned to provide," Kim told *O'Dwyer's*. "At a time when financial brands are navigating a difficult economy, this comprehensive value proposition has proven invaluable."

Kim said the financial sector currently finds itself under enormous economic pressure, and this has put PR and marketing activities under increased scrutiny as a result. Financial marcomms leaders are being asked to defend investments and strategies and to use data to prove performance more than ever. This has placed increased pressure on communicators working in the finance world to provide performance marketing and integrated measurement. At the same time, however, financial brands are also striving to portray themselves as more human.

"The aftermath of Silicon Valley Bank and the banking crisis proves yet again that consumers distrust the financial system," Kim said. "As such, several finance brands are undergoing or will be moving to develop fresh brand narratives that simplify and humanize their stories. Finance needs to get more understandable and financial comms. professionals are already working to find new ways to articulate value propo-



Binna Kim



Jen Prosek



O'Dwyer's financial PR rankings, pg. 30

— Continued on next page

Financial roundup

— Continued from page 28

sitions in ways that engage and earn trust.”

Finn Partners fords new financial frontiers

Finn Partners accounted for \$15.6 million in finance-related net fees last year, an impressive jump from 2021’s \$11.7 million. The independent PR giant now moves into the number-six spot in *O’Dwyer’s* financial rankings, up from number seven in 2022.

Global Financial Services Practice Leader Ryan Barr told *O’Dwyer’s* that the agency last year was fortunate to be selected for several new client engagements while it continued to deepen its existing client relationships by expanding value-added communications solutions beyond traditional earned media and original content development.



Ryan Barr

Finn Partners in 2022 acquired Vancouver, WA-based purpose-driven shop AHA, which has allowed it to work closer with clients on internal communications and employee engagement issues, which in turn will better enable companies

to connect with stakeholders internally and externally.

Given the collapse of SVB, Barr said 2023 has already proven challenging for the financial sector from a communications standpoint. But it has also underscored the need for quality financial communications counsel.

“All regional banks—the backbone of our financial system—had to act quickly to communicate with retail and commercial clients to ensure misinformation and external perceptions did not create a gap with the reality of the actual health of these institutions ... not an easy task. What it showed was financial communications experts at agencies and banks are some of the most resilient professionals in the industry,” Barr said. “The lessons learned from the past few months can and should be applied across other industries to ensure companies quickly counter misinformation in the market and ensure external perceptions do not become realities.”

Looking forward, Barr believes 2023 will be the year that the communications world is forced to confront the realities of AI.

“We’ve talked about the impact technological evolution has had on everyone’s life for decades, from work to personal usages. However, the new advancements in AI will change the way everyone works, commu-

nications professionals included. AI will never completely take over marketing and communications functions ... but there will be areas where AI will speed up the process from initial research and analytics to creative ideation. Marketing and communications agencies will need to embrace change just like any other industry ... they just can’t surrender to the AI challenge as it can never be a substitute for human interactions.”

Stanton diversifies financial client roster

Stanton continued the strong momentum the agency exhibited in 2021 with another solid year in 2022, bringing in more than \$10.4 million in finance-related net fees last year and tallying gains of nearly \$2 million from 2021’s \$8.5 million, which revealed a similar leap from the \$7.6 million the agency charted in COVID 2020. Stanton now assumes the number-nine spot in *O’Dwyer’s* financial/IR rankings, up from 10 last year.



Tom Faust

Managing Director Tom Faust attributed the agency’s success to a series of partnerships with new and diverse financial clients, including middle-market private-investment firms, credit managers, multi-billion asset managers, real estate investment firms and impact investors.

“We found that in 2022 many firms made the shift into post-COVID plans for growth, which extended to a renewed focus on communications,” Faust said. “We also saw financial clients having growing interest in our creative services such as marketing collateral creation, web design and strategic social media. That trend has continued in 2023.”

Faust said the recent spate of recent bank closures that have made headlines in 2023 currently looms large across the financial services landscape, particularly in the worlds of banking and private investment. This isn’t going away anytime soon, and Faust said these developments present both a challenge as well as opportunities for firms specializing in financial PR and investor relations.

“We’ll all be dealing with communications needs stemming from the fallout for a while, as financial organizations address new concerns from depositors, investors and regulators,” Faust said. “And in a world of higher interest rates and equity market challenges, there is renewed investor interest in credit strategies.” ○



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RANKINGS OF FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN FINANCE

Firm	2022 Net Fees	Firm	2022 Net Fees
1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$115,744,000	28. Taylor , New York, NY	\$1,300,000
2. ICR , New York, NY	83,693,800	29. Comms. Strategy Group (CSG) , Denver, CO	1,289,454
3. Prosek Partners , New York, NY	76,875,000	30. Greentarget Global LLC , Chicago, IL	1,248,000
4. Vested , New York, NY	23,811,000	31. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	949,500
5. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	17,300,000	32. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	873,646
6. Finn Partners , New York, NY	15,600,000	33. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	553,196
7. Cognito , New York, NY	13,120,158	34. Rally Point Public Relations , New York, NY	533,031
8. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	11,000,000	35. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	458,916
9. Stanton , New York, NY	10,476,397	36. Slide Nine Agency , Columbus, OH	455,068
10. Dukas Linden Public Relations , New York, NY	9,380,205	37. Milk & Honey PR , New York, NY	413,484
11. Lambert , Grand Rapids, MI	9,043,800	38. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	380,000
12. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	8,482,771	39. IW Group, Inc. , West Hollywood, CA	338,651
13. Zeno Group , New York, NY	7,271,821	40. Butler Associates, LLC , New York, NY	330,953
14. Caliber Corporate Advisers , New York, NY	6,215,314	41. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	308,629
15. BackBay Communications , Boston, MA	5,750,365	42. Red Thread PR , Philadelphia, PA	298,939
16. Bliss Group, The , New York, NY	5,448,281	43. 360PR+ , Boston, MA	255,000
17. Forefront Communications , New York, NY	4,560,667	44. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	245,375
18. Inkhouse , Waltham, MA	3,233,007	45. Akrete , Evanston, IL	189,300
19. Kivvit , Chicago, IL	2,877,273	46. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	144,904
20. G&S Business Communications , New York, NY	2,719,121	47. Beehive Strategic Communication , St. Paul, MN	134,616
21. Hewes Communications , New York, NY	2,640,744	48. Ehrhardt Group, The , New Orleans, LA	120,000
22. Tier One Partners , Boston, MA	1,973,301	49. Inspire PR Group , Westerville, OH	119,979
23. imre, LLC , Baltimore, MD	1,792,000	50. Superior PR , Chicago, IL	91,610
24. Havas Formula , New York, NY	1,664,835	51. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	79,310
25. Lowe Group , Wauwatosa, WI	1,611,227	52. TruePoint Communications , Dallas, TX	74,793
26. Buttonwood Comms. Group , New York, NY	1,484,579	53. Stanton Communications , Washington, DC	35,000
27. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	1,310,000	54. Marketing Maven Public Relations , Camarillo, CA	29,000
		55. Lavidge , Phoenix, AZ	2,000

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Health PR firms post 24.8% '22 growth

The firms ranked by *O'Dwyer's* for healthcare PR posted healthy gains in 2022 as healthcare agencies continue to add new clients and expanded into new markets.

By Kevin McCauley

Healthcare PR firms registered a robust 24.8 percent jump in 2022 fee income to a combined \$1.7 billion in 2022 as they counseled clients dealing with the after effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to *O'Dwyer's* rankings.

Seven of the Top Ten firms posted growth, powered by a 103.3 percent surge to \$368 million at No. 2 Evoke Group and a 64.1 percent gain to \$80.1 million at No. 4 Spectrum.

The firms ranked seven through 10 posted declines in fee income. APCO Worldwide decreased 7.7 percent to \$33.9 million, ICR dipped 13.7 percent to \$31.9 million, Imre fell 8.5 percent to \$31.2 million and Crosby dropped 11.4 percent to \$25.2 million.

Finn Partners adds 42 new clients

Finn Partners' healthcare unit posted 19.1 percent growth to \$52.6 million as the firm added 42 new clients and expanded into new markets via the acquisitions of SPAG (offices in India, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines) and Ireland's Hyderus, which reaches into Europe, Africa and South America.

Gil Bashe, Global Health and Purpose Chair, said his unit tackled hot button issues such as the fragmentation of the health ecosystem and its cost in squandered resources and patient care.

He believes the firm is well positioned to guide clients successfully through this system-wide maze.

In 2022, Finn partnered with Galen Growth and issued a series of reports on "The State of Digital Health," tapping into some 300 million data points across 14,000 global ventures.

Bashe said Finn Partners staffers worldwide worked closely with Fern Lazar, Global Health Practice Lead.

"Fern led knowledge-sharing initiatives by leveraging our continued investment in secure cloud-based IT infrastructure," said Bashe.



Gil Bashe

Working in a hybrid environment, Lazar and colleagues hosted numerous global professional development summits in areas such as brand marketing, clinical trial patient recruitment, investor relations, integrated marketing, social media,

scientific support, and corporate thought leadership.

The healthcare group launched several pro bono initiatives, including "The Heartbreak of the Heartland," rural health effort that was acknowledged by the White House Biden Cancer Moonshot.

Bashe said the health unit's emphasis on values, collaboration, innovation and a desire to tackle societal needs will power growth in 2023 and beyond.

M Booth Health turns away potential clients

M Booth Health enjoyed a 33.9 percent hike in revenues to \$21.9 million, though it turned away three quarters of new business opportunities, according to CEO Stacey Bernstein.

That means 82 percent of growth was organic, achieved by expanding the range of services offered in the PA, marketing communications and social impact practices.

Bernstein, who joined the firm in January 2022 after a dozen years at Weber Shandwick, led the year of transformation with new leadership taking the helm.

Peter Matheson Gay joined from DXTRA Health as Chief Impact Officer; Tayla Mahmud signed on as EVP, Health Equity and Multicultural Strategy from Havas Health & You; and Chaz Cox joined from Edelman as Managing Director, Marketing Communications.

M Booth Health underwent a rebrand in 2022, with a new value proposition of Choose to Challenge—built to help organizations and brands challenge norms, drive results and improve the lives and health of those who need it most, according to Bernstein.

Amid the changes, Bernstein said M Booth Health's culture continued to thrive,



Stacey Bernstein

as demonstrated by its 95 percent voluntary retention rate among staff.

The Bliss Group builds on '22 momentum

The Bliss Group's Healthcare Practice posted growth of 58.6 percent to \$6.8 million with 68 million percent being organic and 32 percent via new clients.

Building on 2022 momentum, The Bliss Group and The Next Practices Group (NPG) launched NPG Health alongside its first firm, Bliss Bio Health (BBH).

The BBH offering is from "atom to access," including marketing communications programs in early science, R&D research, medical education and advertising, commercialization, health programs and reimbursement.

It is led by Gloria Vanderham and Lisa Davidson as CEO and EVP, respectively.

"We have a responsibility to do better and offer unique approaches that promote clarity, collaboration and collective healthcare ecosystem progress. We will attract team members, partners and clients who want to be a part of the solution," said Davidson.

In February, NPG Health launched CTRx Pathways following its work with Johns Hopkins School of Medicine to complete enrollment in two COVID-19 clinical trials.

CTRx Pathways is a platform that accelerates and diversifies clinical trial enrollment by combining analytics; paid, earned, shared and owned (PESO) media; and technology.

The *New England Journal of Medicine* featured CTRx in which both Michael Roth, Chair, NPG Health Group, and Colin Foster, President, The Next Practice, were by-lined alongside the Johns Hopkins team—demonstrating the power of insights-driven marketing communications on patient outcomes.

"The presence of healthcare marketing and communications teams who truly understand the science, patient experience and business of health—equally—is paramount to the evolution of the industry," said Roth. "When we combine expertise within our teams, we are on the right path to achieving better outcomes in care."



Michael Roth



O'Dwyer's healthcare PR rankings, pg. 36

— Continued on page 34



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Healthcare roundup

— Continued from page 32

Ruder Finn pushes boundaries

Ruder Finn Healthcare grew by 24.4 percent to \$56 million in 2022, fueled by organic growth and expanding its roster of innovative biopharma companies and NGOs, including Iveric Bio, Sage Therapeutics, PTC Therapeutics and FNIH, according to Christie Anbar, Global Lead, Healthcare



Christie Anbar

“From redefining the pharma launch playbook, designing new ways to leverage strategic partnerships, and inserting brands into the mainstream cultural zeitgeist through influencer activations and new forms of edutainment, Ruder Finn is continuing to push boundaries to facilitate change that leads to better health outcomes,” she said.

Anbar said RF helped translate today’s communications trends into ROI-generating programs that “amplified the impact of our clients’ science and therapeutics.”

The firm helped advance awareness and uptake of multiple breakthrough cancer and immunology drugs, as well as supported patients and families navigating the emotional side of living with chronic or life-threatening disease.

It supported numerous biotechs progressing new therapeutic modalities with potential for first-of-its-kind patient benefit in vision and hearing loss, sleep disorders and other unmet needs.

“Our work crosses the full patient and therapeutic journey, from communicating around critical milestones, to digitally targeted clinical trial recruitment, to community-building in discreet patient segments, to high-impact awareness and education campaigns including celebrities, KOLs, influencers, and attention-grabbing creative content such as serial podcasts and producing films for major streaming platforms,” said Anbar.

Crosby records solid year

Crosby Marketing reported a solid year with very strong client and staff retention in 2022, according to CEO Ray Crosby, though fee income slipped 11.4 percent to \$25.2 million.

He said the No. 10 ranked healthcare

firm drove record engagement for the Telehealth.HHS.gov website, strong membership growth for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont, record online fundraising for Shriners Hospitals for Children, and generating more than \$120 million in donated media for DAV (Disabled American Veterans) through a PSA campaign.

“We also continued leading strategic communications for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, which puts us on the frontlines of promoting evidence-based preventive care and more equitable health for all,” said Crosby.

He said the firm remains focused on delivering powerful performance marketing solutions in the health care space, and clients really value our ability to connect the dots between patients, providers, payors, policy makers and advocacy groups.

Crosby said his firm is off to a “flying start” in 2023 as he projects 20 growth for the year. ○



Ray Crosby

Technology roundup

— Continued from page 24

SourceCode grows in enterprise tech

At SourceCode, which brought in \$8.5 million in net fees (placing at #23), co-founder and managing partner Greg Mondschein “saw continued growth in enterprise technology platforms, with specific growth in HR, security, cloud infrastructure, financial services and fintech.”

The firm officially launched its strategy and analytics practice, which was “designed to support deeper data driven storytelling and provide deeper insights into the business impact and general effectiveness of the PR campaigns we manage for our clients.”

It also signed such clients as Jenius Bank, Getty Images, Accredible, Appen, Data-bank and Homebase.



Greg Mondschein

While maintaining a focus on its core services, SourceCode is also “focused heavily on expanding our service offerings.” Some of those new offerings include executive brand management, internal comms, digital strategy, influencer strategies and a number of measure-

ment and analytics products.

The agency is also firmly committed to “ensuring we continue to build our cul-

ture in a hybrid working environment. This, in our opinion, is one of the biggest challenges our industry faces.”

Walker Sands does more with less

Cybersecurity, healthcare, cloud, and AI-enabled software and services all played a hand in powering #7 Walker Sands to a 7.1 percent revenue bump to \$30.5 million.

“But perhaps the biggest category winner in 2022 was supply chain and logistics,” said agency President Andrew Cross.

“In terms of services,” he said, “we continue to have considerable momentum in video, motion graphics and social media, as well as data and insights.”

Clients that the firm brought in last year Benevity, Madison Logic, Honor Technology, HireRoad and Echo Global Logistics.

In January 2023, Walker Sands picked up KoMarketing, “which added depth to our capabilities in B2B demand generation, including paid digital advertising and SEO.”

A major hurdle facing the firm, Cross said, is the need to do more with less. Companies are “looking for agency partners to be flexible, adaptable and strategic. In some cases, we saw technology clients who experienced multiple rounds of layoffs go out of their way to preserve agency budgets because they view our team as mission-critical.”



Andrew Cross

As regards the future of the tech sector itself, “we will likely see consolidation across a number of tech categories over the next year. Venture-backed companies that don’t raise a fresh round of financing will look for soft landings, so we expect our clients to be involved in M&A at a healthy pace.”

Bospar embodies all things digital

Bospar, our #15 firm, was a big growth story in 2022, with fees up 49.9 percent to \$16.9 million. “We saw a lot of growth in sectors driven by the global shift to all-things-virtual,” said Bospar Principal Curtis Sparrer. “from HR, education and health technology to data infrastructure and security.”

The agency also launched integrated marketing services, including digital asset development, podcast production and event management.

High-profile additions to Bospar’s client roster included Croatian IT and telecommunications company which the agency landed coverage on platforms as the Today Show, and REAL Messenger, a social media app for real estate agents developed by a Bravo network alum.

Sparrer sees “huge opportunity to grow in areas where we’re already strong, like health tech, and in emerging sectors like Web3.” ○



Curtis Sparrer

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RANKINGS OF FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN HEALTHCARE

Firm	2022 Net Fees	Firm	2022 Net Fees
1. Real Chemistry , San Francisco, CA	\$555,000,000	44. Red Thread PR , Philadelphia, PA	\$1,059,510
2. Evoke , Philadelphia, PA	368,000,000	45. Beehive Strategic Communication , St. Paul, MN	1,030,244
3. Edelman , New York, NY	224,352,000	46. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	1,001,535
4. Spectrum , Washington, DC	80,174,000	47. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	999,514
5. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	56,010,000	48. Bellmont Partners , Minneapolis, MN	983,746
6. Finn Partners , New York, NY	52,600,000	49. G&S Business Communications , New York, NY	945,840
7. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	33,900,000	50. L.C. Williams & Associates , Chicago, IL	811,862
8. ICR , New York, NY	33,194,813	51. Merritt Group , McLean, VA	805,978
9. imre, LLC , Baltimore, MD	31,879,000	52. The TASC Group , New York, NY	740,000
10. Crosby , Annapolis, MD	25,213,010	53. IW Group, Inc. , West Hollywood, CA	712,759
11. M Booth Health , New York, NY	21,811,192	54. BLAZE , Santa Monica, CA	634,382
12. JPA Health , Washington, DC	19,965,000	55. Tier One Partners , Boston, MA	564,718
13. Zeno Group , New York, NY	13,133,411	56. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	471,679
14. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	13,017,928	57. PSC (Princeton Strategic Comms.) , Trenton, NJ	444,139
15. MikeWorldWide , New York, NY	12,031,998	58. Marketing Maven PR , Camarillo, CA	443,471
16. Sam Brown Inc. , Wayne, PA	11,428,977	59. Landis Communications , San Francisco, CA	427,000
17. Matter Communications , Boston, MA	10,284,000	60. Ehrhardt Group, The , New Orleans, LA	390,945
18. Padilla , Minneapolis, MN	8,388,077	61. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	375,000
19. Health+Commerce , Eagle, ID	8,023,637	62. Judge Public Relations , Tampa, FL	369,264
20. Hunter , New York, NY	7,400,000	63. Havas Formula , New York, NY	367,435
21. Bliss Group, The , New York, NY	6,844,663	64. Rosica Communications , Fair Lawn, NJ	361,385
22. PAN Communications , Boston, MA	6,616,441	65. Stanton Communications , Washington, DC	350,000
23. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	6,500,000	66. Franco , Detroit, MI	320,445
24. Kivvit , Chicago, IL	6,450,236	67. Slide Nine Agency , Columbus, OH	301,002
25. LaVoie Health Science , Boston, MA	5,752,399	68. Milk & Honey PR , New York, NY	277,750
26. Moore, Inc. , Tallahassee, FL	5,022,468	69. Standing Partnership , St. Louis, MO	275,405
27. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	4,281,400	70. Superior PR , Chicago, IL	269,856
28. MCS Healthcare PR , Bedminster, NJ	3,722,106	71. Hoyt Organization Inc., The , Torrance, CA	250,000
29. BRG Communications , Alexandria, VA	3,495,531	72. Buchanan Public Relations , Bryn Mawr, PA	226,865
30. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	2,988,149	73. BizCom Associates , Plano, TX	216,000
31. Fiona Hutton & Associates, Inc. , Los Angeles, CA	2,609,362	74. 360PR+ , Boston, MA	205,500
32. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	2,488,396	75. BoardroomPR , Fort Lauderdale, FL	200,000
33. Public Communications Inc. , Chicago, IL	2,305,548	76. WordWrite Communications LLC , Pittsburgh, PA	174,500
34. Inkhouse , Waltham, MA	2,154,774	77. Lavidge , Phoenix, AZ	170,062
35. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	1,900,000	78. Greentarget Global LLC , Chicago, IL	139,000
36. Tunheim , Minneapolis, MN	1,800,000	79. Fish Consulting , Fort Lauderdale, FL	111,000
37. Singer Associates PR, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	1,751,926	80. Pugh & Tiller PR, LLC , Annapolis, MD	65,891
38. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	1,650,000	81. Wordhampton PR, Inc. , East Hampton, NY	31,500
39. V2 Communications , Boston, MA	1,641,007	82. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	29,198
40. Bospar , San Francisco, CA	1,251,828	83. TruePoint Communications , Dallas, TX	23,495
41. Communications Strategy Group , Denver, CO	1,237,354	84. Violet PR , Montclair, NJ	12,000
42. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	1,177,522	85. SPM Communications , Dallas, TX	6,946
43. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	1,078,977	86. Lawlor Media Group , New York, NY	6,000



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O'Dwyer's Industry Rankings: #10 Healthcare and #27 Overall

Letting the jury decide

In litigation matters, an effective communications strategy can protect your name in the court of public opinion.

By Thomas Butler

On a regular basis, we see everyone from Hollywood celebrities to brand-name consumer products like Johnson & Johnson's now infamous baby powder dealing with the fallout from litigation and scandal.

Our Constitution affords everyone their day in court, but the instinct to protect your besmirched name must go beyond a jury of your peers and into the court of public opinion, where sometimes the sentence delivered is even harsher.

Famed litigator and civil rights activist William Kunstler knew that dance well. Kunstler was a legal legend who frequently commanded the headlines for defending the Freedom Riders and representing the likes of the ACLU, Chicago Seven and the American Indian Movement. He was even among those with the Reverend Martin Luther King on the day he died.

Journalists flocked to cover his cases because they knew he was a legal commentator they could count on to give them a few great headlines and perfect soundbites. Famed legal writer Sidney Zion called Kunstler, "one of the few lawyers in town who knows how to talk to the press. His stories always check out and he's not afraid to talk to you, and he's got credibility."

I had the opportunity to work with Kunstler when I was in my mid-20s at one of the big brand-name public relations firms. On a flight back to New York from a client media event in 1993, he turned to me and offered some wisdom: "As an attorney, I can win my case inside the courtroom, with the greatest of legal arguments, but I can also do so as effectively on the courthouse steps with the news media."

As Kunstler explained to that much younger version of me, while some attorneys write their legal briefs in a perfectly fine and fundamentally well-researched manner, there was also another way to effectively help make a complicated legal narrative—sharing his much more compelling side of the story to allow it to gain more traction when told on evening news broadcasts or by a columnist the following morning.

Fox chooses settlement vs. digging in

Nowhere in recent weeks has that been more apparent than in the Dominion Voting Systems election defamation lawsuit versus Fox News.

At the 11th hour, right before the litigants

were set to go on trial, Dominion came out on top with a settlement of \$767.5 million. The conservative news network decided the stakes were too high to move forward with a legal process that likely would've consumed years more worth of both legal and water-cooler debates. It was more reasonable to come up with a financial solution in advance and cut future potential losses.

The short-term fallout still sent shockwaves through the company. For Fox News shareholders, the value of their holdings dropped by 5 percent, as the company lost \$800 million in valuation. For Fox News personality Tucker Carlson, one of the network's most popular, the settlement agreement is the likely reason for losing his anchor position. For the cable news network to lock out a host with a nightly audience exceeding 3.4 million loyal viewers, is quite a statement. But the network weighed its options and decided to stop the long-term bleeding by withstanding some short-term pain.

Not every major bold-faced name makes the same calculation, for better or worse.

Around Labor Day last year, we were asked to conduct litigation support messaging to propel a series of high-profile cases in the news that involved, among other things, an intellectual property dispute over book and film rights versus the rapper Drake, and NBA basketball legend LeBron James.

While the parties had tried unsuccessfully for years to amicably negotiate in good faith, somehow it took the pressure and attention brought to bear by a geyser of international media attention we achieved to motivate the disparate parties. About a month ago, the parties were finally on the road towards amicably settling the dispute.

Madison Square Garden bans lawyers

The head of a respected litigation practice contacted us shortly before the tip-off of the NBA season to advise he was about to become the plaintiff in a unique case versus the New York Knicks and their owner, Madison Square Garden Entertainment.

A proud Knicks fan and season ticket holder for nearly 50 years, he found his subscription abruptly canceled and he and 60 other attorneys at the firm were banned from entering The Garden, Radio City Music Hall, The Beacon Theatre and other MSG venues, simply for being an adverse party in an unrelated litigation vs MSG. This became the seminal case resulting in

copycat suits from dozens of other law firms versus MSG bans.

Our team launched the strategic earned media campaign with a one-on-one sit down with the *New York Times*, for a front-page feature, to be followed by a dramatic story on NBC News.

Our pitch was, how could the management of MSG be so cold-hearted to ban one of its most loyal and longest season ticket holders? And from another perspective, isn't banning lawyers for simply providing legal representation an affront to our American justice system?

Our client simply wanted his season tickets back, which could have been an easy solution.

Instead, the sports and entertainment conglomerate dug in and soon acknowledged its use—or rather, abuse—of artificial intelligence and facial recognition software to effectuate and widen the ban to more lawyers and firms. In the ensuing months, the floodgates opened, with thousands of earned media stories—in print, digital, blogs, radio and television—addressing the chilling "big brother" aspect of MSG's actions.

This led to New York political leaders questioning the legality and renewal of tens of millions in annual tax abatements granted to MSG. It caused the State Attorney General to investigate the use of facial recognition in connection with state anti-discrimination laws, while the NY State Liquor Authority questioned if MSG's ban jeopardized the company's licenses to sell alcohol at its theaters, nightclubs and restaurants.

All this provoked MSG CEO James Dolan to defend himself and the company in an ill-conceived, live appearance on "Good Day New York," where the Garden owner only added more fuel to the fire, at a time when diplomacy and lowering the volume should've been on the menu.

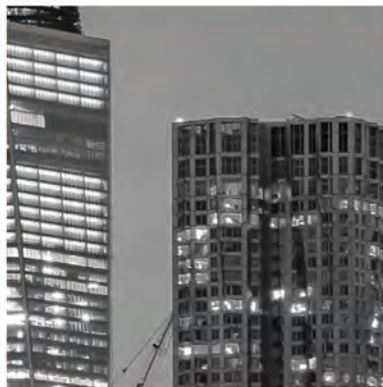
All of this is truly validation of the wisdom espoused by Kunstler 30 years earlier, and a punctuation point on the essential role professional services communications and public relations practitioners play. An effective and well-executed communications strategy can absolutely move the public opinion needle, especially in litigation. Because sometimes it's not the jury who will decide your fate.

Thomas P. Butler is President and Founder of Butler Associates, LLC. ○



Thomas P. Butler

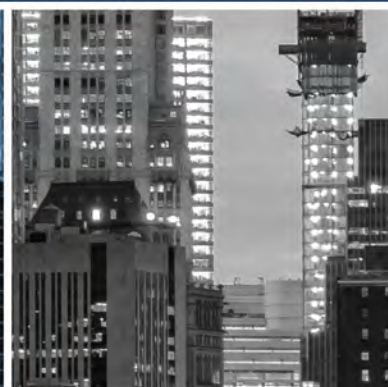
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RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN **AGRICULTURE**

1. G&S Business Communications , New York, NY	\$14,045,589
2. Edelman , New York, NY	7,294,000
3. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	3,400,000
4. Padilla , Minneapolis, MN	2,544,627
5. imre, LLC , Baltimore, MD	2,468,000
6. Zeno Group , New York, NY	1,846,631
7. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	1,478,875
8. Inspire PR Group , Westerville, OH	1,434,365
9. Moore, Inc. , Tallahassee, FL	998,465
10. Standing Partnership , St. Louis, MO	641,870
11. Bellmont Partners , Minneapolis, MN	255,863
12. Slide Nine Agency , Columbus, OH	248,246
13. Tunheim , Minneapolis, MN	111,000
14. Rosica Communications , Fair Lawn, NJ	110,000
15. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	43,159
16. Akrete , Evanston, IL	34,000
17. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	16,790
18. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	7,000

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN
TRAVEL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Finn Partners , New York, NY	\$23,500,000
2. Edelman , New York, NY	22,669,000
3. Zimmerman Agency , Tallahassee, FL	17,500,000
4. J Public Relations , New York, NY	16,184,000
5. Turner , a Fahlgren Mortine company, New York, NY	14,705,846
6. MMGY NJF , New York, NY	9,510,162
7. Lou Hammond Group , New York, NY	9,068,858
8. Zeno Group , New York, NY	6,921,469
9. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	6,461,067
10. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	5,400,200
11. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	3,230,000
12. Zapwater Communications, Inc. , Chicago, IL	2,833,100
13. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	2,500,000
14. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	1,982,596
15. Kivvit , Chicago, IL	1,764,785
16. Hemsworth Comms. , Fort Lauderdale, FL	1,429,478
17. Pineapple Public Relations , Chamblee, GA	1,382,009
18. Violet PR , Montclair, NJ	1,011,230
19. Berk Communications , New York, NY	901,933
20. Bellmont Partners , Minneapolis, MN	592,851
21. Fish Consulting , Fort Lauderdale, FL	440,000
22. Tunheim , Minneapolis, MN	440,000
23. Singer Associates PR, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	402,026
24. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	277,010
25. Ehrhardt Group, The , New Orleans, LA	257,280
26. Landis Communications , San Francisco, CA	248,000
27. 360PR+ , Boston, MA	230,000
28. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	196,477
29. PSC (Princeton Strategic Communications) , Trenton, NJ	177,214
30. Marketing Maven PR , Camarillo, CA	160,256
31. TruePoint Communications , Dallas, TX	138,931
32. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	136,250

Travel & Economic Development cont.

33. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	\$129,477
34. Slide Nine Agency , Columbus, OH	99,597
35. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	93,000
36. Lawlor Media Group , New York, NY	62,900
37. Inspire PR Group , Westerville, OH	44,128

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN **EDUCATION**

1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$8,676,000
2. Finn Partners , New York, NY	7,800,000
3. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	5,700,000
4. Kivvit , Chicago, IL	4,759,618
5. Comms. Strategy Group (CSG) , Denver, CO	3,165,132
6. Lambert , Grand Rapids, MI	2,849,155
7. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	2,166,812
8. Moore, Inc. , Tallahassee, FL	1,718,891
9. Inkhouse , Waltham, MA	1,305,736
10. Lee Andrews Group , Los Angeles, CA	1,173,123
11. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	1,030,000
12. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	962,453
13. Zeno Group , New York, NY	843,982
14. Rosica Communications , Fair Lawn, NJ	706,212
15. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	683,789
16. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	640,000
17. Inspire PR Group , Westerville, OH	580,090
18. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	505,000
19. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	457,000
20. Public Communications Inc. , Chicago, IL	370,102
21. PSC (Princeton Strategic Communications) , Trenton, NJ	346,166
22. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	332,397
23. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	298,000
24. Franco , Detroit, MI	291,010
25. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	278,572
26. Beehive Strategic Communication , St. Paul, MN	263,454
27. Lavidge , Phoenix, AZ	239,833
28. Sachs Media , Tallahassee, FL	238,480
29. Tunheim , Minneapolis, MN	215,000
30. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	205,000
31. Singer Associates PR, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	165,010
32. Milk & Honey PR , New York, NY	127,285
33. Marketing Maven Public Relations , Camarillo, CA	125,750
34. Slide Nine Agency , Columbus, OH	115,440
35. Landis Communications , San Francisco, CA	107,000
36. Hoyt Organization Inc., The , Torrance, CA	100,000
37. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	86,318
38. BizCom Associates , Plano, TX	85,000
39. BoardroomPR , Ft. Lauderdale, FL	75,000
40. Red Thread PR , Philadelphia, PA	71,783
41. Buchanan Public Relations , Bryn Mawr, PA	54,707
42. TruePoint Communications , Dallas, TX	25,694
43. Lawlor Media Group , New York, NY	4,000

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN **BEAUTY & FASHION**

1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$56,049,000
2. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	14,810,000
3. 5W Public Relations, New York, NY	10,600,000
4. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	8,366,221
5. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	4,642,140
6. Turner, a Fahlgren Mortine company, New York, NY	3,474,749
7. Zeno Group, New York, NY	2,575,601
8. imre, LLC, Baltimore, MD	2,509,000
9. Hunter, New York, NY	2,500,000
10. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	1,980,000
11. Berk Communications, New York, NY	1,804,501
12. Taylor, New York, NY	1,800,000
13. AMP3 Public Relations, New York, NY	1,703,813
14. Havas Formula, New York, NY	1,583,566
15. Zapwater Communications, Inc., Chicago, IL	930,650
16. J Public Relations, New York, NY	860,000
17. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	773,485
18. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	602,504
19. Fish Consulting, Fort Lauderdale, FL	600,000
20. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	487,153
21. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	404,336
22. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	400,000
23. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	388,432
24. 360PR+, Boston, MA	370,000
25. Inkhouse, Waltham, MA	233,483
26. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	200,300
27. Marketing Maven Public Relations, Camarillo, CA	122,645
28. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	97,525
29. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	52,805
30. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	51,155
31. Wordhampton PR, Inc., East Hampton, NY	31,063
32. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	25,000
33. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	22,000
34. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	11,000

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN
HOME FURNISHINGS

1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$14,199,000
2. Zeno Group, New York, NY	13,352,949
3. G&S Business Communications, New York, NY	4,996,711
4. L.C. Williams & Associates, Chicago, IL	3,833,286
5. Hunter, New York, NY	3,500,000
6. 360PR+, Boston, MA	3,120,500
7. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	2,777,978
8. 5W Public Relations, New York, NY	2,500,000
9. Pierpont Communications, Houston, TX	2,294,897
10. Havas Formula, New York, NY	1,359,308
11. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	830,000
12. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	300,000
13. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	299,217
14. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	245,450
15. Marketing Maven Public Relations, Camarillo, CA	205,393
16. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	180,331

Home Furnishings cont.

17. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	\$101,975
18. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	73,266
19. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	46,275
20. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	43,159
21. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	26,394

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN **NON-PROFITS**

1. Crosby, Annapolis, MD	\$6,702,967
2. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	1,403,292
3. Butler Associates, LLC, New York, NY	1,061,562
4. Sachs Media, Tallahassee, FL	1,013,478
5. MikeWorldWide, New York, NY	861,751
6. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	806,078
7. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	777,397
8. Lambert, Grand Rapids, MI	771,800
9. Pierpont Communications, Houston, TX	719,950
10. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	626,825
11. Stanton Communications, Washington, DC	525,000
12. PSC (Princeton Strategic Communications), Trenton, NJ	490,815
13. Franco, Detroit, MI	483,476
14. Singer Associates PR, Inc., San Francisco, CA	453,086
15. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	427,539
16. Rosica Communications, Fair Lawn, NJ	400,000
17. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	380,000
18. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	342,775
19. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	305,000
20. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	259,364
21. Slide Nine Agency, Columbus, OH	240,483
22. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	239,500
23. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	225,114
24. Violet PR, Montclair, NJ	200,579
25. BoardroomPR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	200,000
26. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	181,765
27. Inspire PR Group, Westerville, OH	174,290
28. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	149,100
29. Bellmont Partners, Minneapolis, MN	143,911
30. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	140,673
31. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	140,000
32. WordWrite Communications LLC, Pittsburgh, PA	129,600
33. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	110,500
34. Hoyt Organization Inc., The, Torrance, CA	100,000
35. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	90,000
36. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	86,318
37. Landis Communications, San Francisco, CA	83,000
38. Inkhouse, Waltham, MA	82,832
39. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	64,495
40. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	61,609
41. Marketing Maven Public Relations, Camarillo, CA	60,925
42. Wordhampton PR, Inc., East Hampton, NY	57,545
43. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	27,193
44. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	10,612
45. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	5,725

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN REAL ESTATE/FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$6,842,000
2. ICR, New York, NY	3,846,141
3. Akrete, Evanston, IL	2,164,686
4. Singer Associates PR, Inc., San Francisco, CA	1,694,326
5. Gregory FCA, Ardmore, PA	1,557,705
6. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	1,492,835
7. BoardroomPR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	1,300,000
8. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	1,211,717
9. Inkhouse, Waltham, MA	875,571
10. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	840,000
11. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	810,000
12. Havas Formula, New York, NY	787,000
13. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	626,880
14. Hoyt Organization Inc., The, Torrance, CA	550,000
15. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	486,000
16. Franco, Detroit, MI	435,335
17. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	389,420
18. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	377,174
19. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	322,235
20. Davies Public Affairs, Santa Barbara, CA	300,000
21. Butler Associates, LLC, New York, NY	293,400
22. Lee Andrews Group, Los Angeles, CA	289,421
23. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	241,467
24. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	234,204
25. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	224,506
26. Violet PR, Montclair, NJ	181,255
27. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	141,500
28. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	129,477
29. Pugh & Tiller PR, LLC, Annapolis, MD	116,760
30. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	94,549
31. J Public Relations, New York, NY	68,000
32. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	66,520
33. Zapwater Communications, Inc., Chicago, IL	60,500
34. Inspire PR Group, Westerville, OH	47,491
35. Zeno Group, New York, NY	47,069
36. Wordhampton PR, Inc., East Hampton, NY	41,613
37. Bianchi Public Relations, Troy, MI	10,189
38. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	9,075
39. Stanton Communications, Washington, DC	9,000
40. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	2,500
41. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	2,500

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN PURPOSE/CSR

1. Finn Partners, New York, NY	\$11,300,000
2. APCO Worldwide, Washington, DC	8,400,000
3. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	6,138,289
4. Taylor, New York, NY	4,100,000
5. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	3,360,000
6. Zeno Group, New York, NY	2,525,641
7. The TASC Group, New York, NY	860,000
8. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	268,040
9. BRG Communications, Alexandria, VA	212,500
10. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	160,000
11. Berk Communications, New York, NY	150,000
12. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	120,448
13. Rosica Communications, Fair Lawn, NJ	93,225
14. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	61,800
15. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	50,236
16. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	43,159
17. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	24,648

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN ENTERTAINMENT

1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$24,438,000
2. Finn Partners, New York, NY	11,200,000
3. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	6,341,515
4. Taylor, New York, NY	2,100,000
5. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	1,670,000
6. Zeno Group, New York, NY	1,626,333
7. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	1,515,544
8. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	990,000
9. 360PR+, Boston, MA	632,000
10. Berk Communications, New York, NY	612,700
11. Havas Formula, New York, NY	484,552
12. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	457,836
13. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	424,493
14. Zapwater Communications, Inc., Chicago, IL	354,040
15. Stanton Communications, Washington, DC	341,600
16. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	262,221
17. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	212,600
18. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	211,000
19. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	176,499
20. PSC (Princeton Strategic Communications), Trenton, NJ	156,000
21. Singer Associates PR, Inc., San Francisco, CA	131,982
22. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	125,000
23. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	97,000
24. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	86,318
25. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	60,000
26. Milk & Honey PR, New York, NY	56,100
27. Marketing Maven Public Relations, Camarillo, CA	50,250
28. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	22,962
29. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	18,868
30. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	8,529
31. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	4,250

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN SPORTS & LEISURE

1. Taylor, New York, NY	10,200,000
2. MikeWorldWide, New York, NY	4,992,946
3. Berk Communications, New York, NY	2,966,393
4. Havas Formula, New York, NY	2,686,412
5. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	2,635,035
6. Edelman, New York, NY	2,444,000
7. Finn Partners, New York, NY	1,500,000
8. imre, LLC, Baltimore, MD	1,482,000
9. Zeno Group, New York, NY	1,329,637
10. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	813,612
11. Lambert, Grand Rapids, MI	782,600
12. Prosek Partners, New York, NY	775,000
13. 360PR+, Boston, MA	500,000
14. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	297,125
15. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	225,000
16. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	200,851
17. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	141,617
18. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	90,040
19. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	86,318
20. PSC (Princeton Strategic Communications), Trenton, NJ	85,000
21. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	84,956
22. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	50,200
23. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	43,376
24. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	36,200
25. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	23,385
26. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	21,000
27. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	14,500
28. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	3,000

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY & GREENTECH

1. APCO Worldwide, Washington, DC	\$53,900,000
2. Finn Partners, New York, NY	8,100,000
3. Edelman, New York, NY	6,246,000
4. Sachs Media, Tallahassee, FL	4,502,290
5. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	4,428,208
6. Moore, Inc., Tallahassee, FL	4,106,344
7. Fiona Hutton & Associates, Inc., Los Angeles, CA	3,771,986
8. Perry Communications Group, Inc., Sacramento, CA	2,674,124
9. Kiterocket, Phoenix, AZ	2,228,242
10. Lee Andrews Group, Los Angeles, CA	2,026,476
11. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	1,870,000
12. Prosek Partners, New York, NY	1,500,000
13. Davies Public Affairs, Santa Barbara, CA	1,500,000
14. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	810,623
15. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	807,235
16. Zeno Group, New York, NY	742,692
17. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	719,921
18. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	662,000
19. Gregory FCA, Ardmore, PA	576,900
20. Communications Strategy Group (CSG), Denver, CO	487,522
21. Butler Associates, LLC, New York, NY	458,261
22. Inkhous, Waltham, MA	341,004
23. 360PR+, Boston, MA	300,000
24. The TASC Group, New York, NY	280,000
25. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	257,393
26. Milk & Honey PR, New York, NY	217,900
27. Singer Associates PR, Inc., San Francisco, CA	214,266
28. Inspire PR Group, Westerville, OH	192,978
29. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	175,000
30. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	168,175
31. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	147,500
32. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	147,036
33. Tier One Partners, Boston, MA	69,811
34. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	43,159
35. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	40,000
36. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	1,263

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN INDUSTRIAL

1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$47,525,000
2. Zeno Group, New York, NY	13,678,964
3. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	5,450,000
4. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	4,229,414
5. Finn Partners, New York, NY	2,600,000
6. imre, LLC, Baltimore, MD	1,938,000
7. Havas Formula, New York, NY	1,865,481
8. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	1,322,256
9. Racepoint Global, Boston, MA	1,064,000
10. Pierpont Communications, Houston, TX	996,584
11. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	874,281
12. Stanton Communications, Washington, DC	630,000
13. Slide Nine Agency, Columbus, OH	469,443
14. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	320,000
15. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	275,600
16. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	228,138
17. Belmont Partners, Minneapolis, MN	192,320
18. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	176,824
19. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	168,000
20. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	147,177
21. WordWrite Communications LLC, Pittsburgh, PA	142,900
22. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	129,477
23. Franco, Detroit, MI	66,000
24. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	14,400
25. Tier One Partners, Boston, MA	6,442

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN AUTOMOTIVE/TRANSPORTATION

1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$25,265,000
2. APCO Worldwide, Washington, DC	15,000,000
3. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	6,030,000
4. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	3,873,537
5. Lambert, Grand Rapids, MI	3,581,074
6. Zeno Group, New York, NY	3,547,011
7. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	2,565,142
8. Lee Andrews Group, Los Angeles, CA	2,362,953
9. Havas Formula, New York, NY	1,576,996
10. Franco, Detroit, MI	1,264,275
11. Bianchi Public Relations, Troy, MI	1,097,158
12. imre, LLC, Baltimore, MD	1,053,000
13. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	882,525
14. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	833,050
15. Racepoint Global, Boston, MA	530,000
16. 360PR+, Boston, MA	433,000
17. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	400,000
18. Zapwater Communications, Inc., Chicago, IL	307,210
19. Violet PR, Montclair, NJ	124,335
20. BoardroomPR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	100,000
21. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	95,000
22. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	90,993
23. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	90,000
24. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	86,318
25. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	52,614
26. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	16,860
27. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	15,000
28. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	8,000
29. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	7,487

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN ENERGY

1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$43,285,000
2. APCO Worldwide, Washington, DC	11,300,000
3. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	7,791,324
4. Davies Public Affairs, Santa Barbara, CA	5,500,000
5. G&S Business Communications, New York, NY	4,218,312
6. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	2,853,433
7. Pierpont Communications, Houston, TX	1,507,856
8. Singer Associates PR, Inc., San Francisco, CA	1,372,241
9. Fiona Hutton & Associates, Inc., Los Angeles, CA	1,287,279
10. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	942,284
11. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	854,774
12. V2 Communications, Boston, MA	794,657
13. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	765,527
14. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	755,449
15. Slide Nine Agency, Columbus, OH	572,356
16. Inspire PR Group, Westerville, OH	405,582
17. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	378,405
18. Franco, Detroit, MI	306,239
19. Stanton Communications, Washington, DC	193,900
20. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	146,501
21. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	127,000
22. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	86,318
23. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	86,000
24. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	66,385
25. Milk & Honey PR, New York, NY	60,237
26. Inkhous, Waltham, MA	30,594
27. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	14,400

RANKINGS OF FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

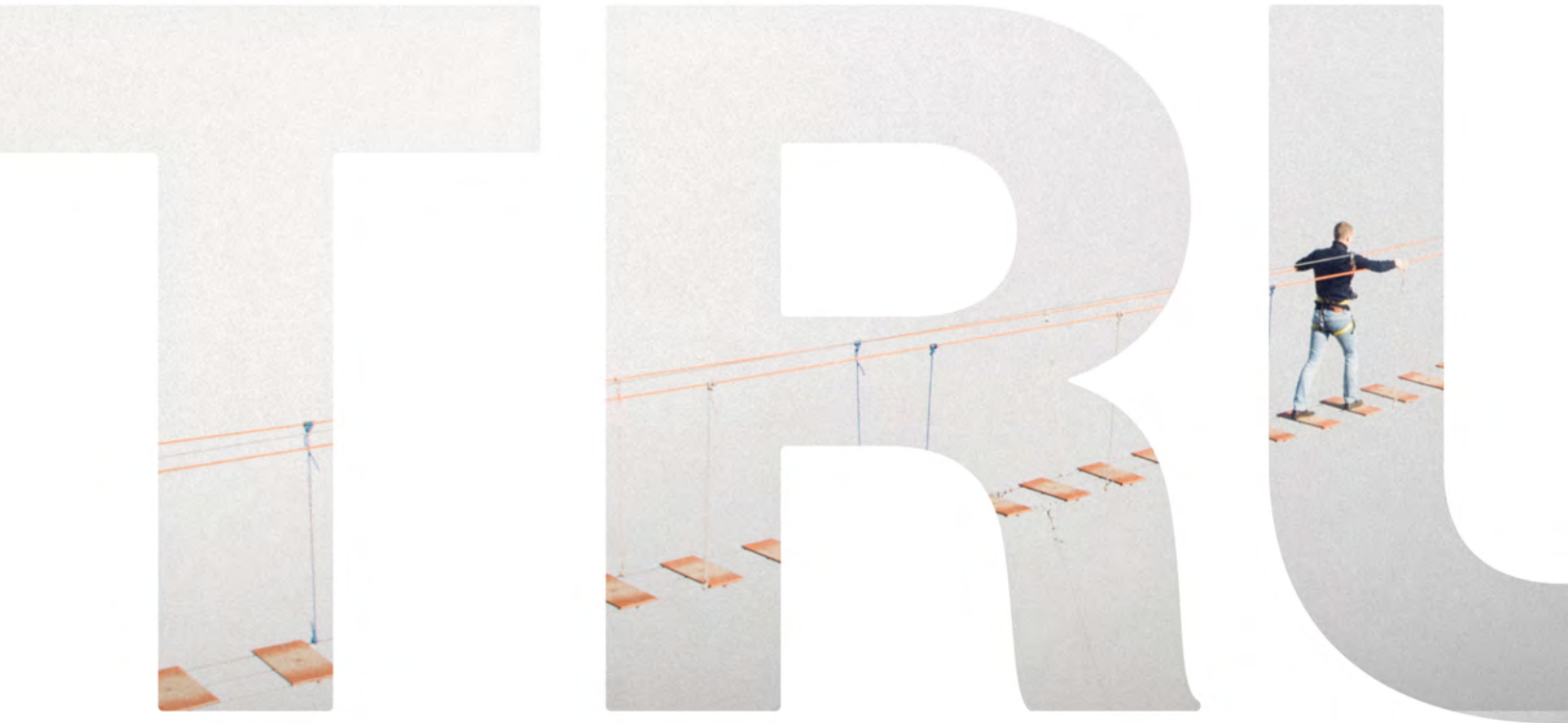
Firm	2022 Net Fees	Firm	2022 Net Fees
1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$119,591,000	31. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	\$584,386
2. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	21,320,000	32. Gregory FCA, Ardmore, PA	540,720
3. Prosek Partners, New York, NY	12,500,000	33. Belmont Partners, Minneapolis, MN	504,674
4. Infinite Global, New York, NY	8,523,266	34. Marketing Maven Public Relations, Camarillo, CA	486,245
5. Greentarget Global LLC, Chicago, IL	8,260,000	35. WordWrite Communications LLC, Pittsburgh, PA	480,000
6. Padilla, Minneapolis, MN	8,214,115	36. Singer Associates PR, Inc., San Francisco, CA	445,357
7. 5W Public Relations, New York, NY	7,100,000	37. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	355,267
8. Bliss Group, The, New York, NY	6,918,011	38. Berk Communications, New York, NY	347,500
9. MikeWorldWide, New York, NY	6,897,217	39. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	320,000
10. Zeno Group, New York, NY	6,291,843	40. Butler Associates, LLC, New York, NY	312,500
11. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	4,763,976	41. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	306,543
12. Havas Formula, New York, NY	3,174,958	42. 360PR+, Boston, MA	230,000
13. Ripp Media/PR, Inc., New York, NY	2,600,000	43. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	215,795
14. Finn Partners, New York, NY	2,500,000	44. Franco, Detroit, MI	188,125
15. Victorious PR, Las Vegas, NV	2,274,229	45. PSC (Princeton Strategic Communications), Trenton, NJ	186,600
16. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	2,249,023	46. Slide Nine Agency, Columbus, OH	157,621
17. G&S Business Communications, New York, NY	1,692,730	47. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	155,979
18. Pierpont Communications, Houston, TX	1,588,759	48. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	152,000
19. BoardroomPR, Fort Lauderdale, FL	1,525,000	49. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	151,990
20. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	1,497,759	50. Violet PR, Montclair, NJ	140,088
21. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	1,301,438	51. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	139,045
22. Fish Consulting, Fort Lauderdale, FL	1,291,000	52. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	120,202
23. Sachs Media, Tallahassee, FL	1,285,145	53. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	61,558
24. Virgo PR, New York, NY	1,100,000	54. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	50,500
25. Inkhouse, Waltham, MA	1,006,817	55. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	31,925
26. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	999,778	56. Pugh & Tiller PR, LLC, Annapolis, MD	23,899
27. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	920,564	57. Wordhampton PR, Inc., East Hampton, NY	23,118
28. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	786,611	58. Milk & Honey PR, New York, NY	16,300
29. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	715,044	59. Racepoint Global, Boston, MA	11,000
30. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	593,895	60. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	2,640

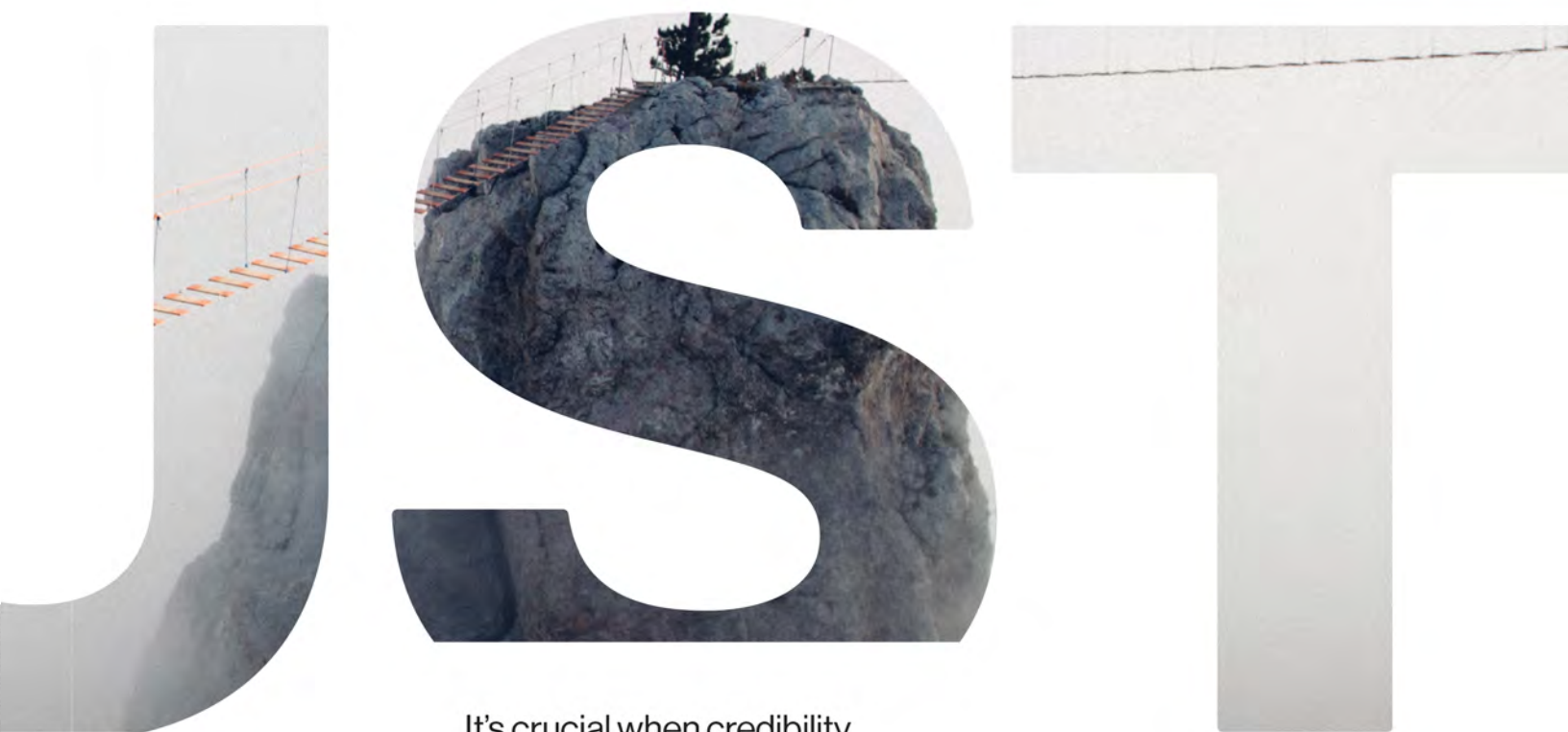
RANKINGS OF FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN **FOOD & BEVERAGE**

Firm	2021 Net Fees	Firm	2021 Net Fees
1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$129,019,000	25. Inkhouse , Waltham, MA	\$507,374
2. Hunter , New York, NY	23,200,000	26. Slide Nine Agency , Columbus, OH	393,338
3. Zeno Group , New York, NY	22,013,269	27. Buchanan Public Relations , Bryn Mawr, PA	375,623
4. Havas Formula , New York, NY	16,680,876	28. Tunheim , Minneapolis, MN	375,000
5. Padilla , Minneapolis, MN	15,753,827	29. BizCom Associates , Plano, TX	353,000
6. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	12,380,000	30. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	269,951
7. MikeWorldWide , New York, NY	12,170,275	31. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	248,007
8. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	11,300,000	32. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	210,200
9. Finn Partners , New York, NY	8,500,000	33. L.C. Williams & Associates , Chicago, IL	207,447
10. Taylor , New York, NY	7,200,000	34. Hemsworth Communications , Fort Lauderdale, FL	178,050
11. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	6,300,000	35. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	160,000
12. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	4,770,999	36. Franco , Detroit, MI	159,365
13. 360PR+ , Boston, MA	3,700,000	37. Marketing Maven Public Relations , Camarillo, CA	147,100
14. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	3,635,906	38. Beehive Strategic Communication , St. Paul, MN	128,500
15. BLAZE , Santa Monica, CA	3,290,632	39. Lawlor Media Group , New York, NY	111,600
16. Lambert , Grand Rapids, MI	3,204,400	40. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	86,318
17. Fish Consulting , Fort Lauderdale, FL	2,860,000	41. Singer Associates PR, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	84,771
18. SPM Communications , Dallas, TX	2,365,757	42. Ehrhardt Group, The , New Orleans, LA	80,173
19. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	2,130,537	43. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	60,000
20. Berk Communications , New York, NY	1,428,628	44. IW Group, Inc. , West Hollywood, CA	46,668
21. Zimmerman Agency , Tallahassee, FL	1,400,000	45. Tier One Partners , Boston, MA	38,690
22. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	1,170,590	46. Judge Public Relations , Tampa, FL	9,750
23. Stuntman PR , New York, NY	1,092,137	47. Zapwater Communications, Inc. , Chicago, IL	8,000
24. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	730,000	48. Kivvit , Chicago, IL	1,853

RANKINGS OF FIRMS SPECIALIZING IN **RESTAURANTS**

1. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	\$7,516,247	7. Wordhampton PR, Inc. , East Hampton, NY	\$397,355
2. Champion Management Group , Dallas, TX	5,274,124	8. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	360,000
3. Zeno Group , New York, NY	3,093,967	9. Inspire PR Group , Westerville, OH	348,659
4. IW Group, Inc. , West Hollywood, CA	2,109,518	10. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	200,125
5. Havas Formula , New York, NY	1,513,687	11. Ehrhardt Group, The , New Orleans, LA	90,933
6. Edelman , New York, NY	1,305,000	12. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	86,318





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PR firms chart 18.2% growth in '22

The top independent PR firms participating in *O'Dwyer's* annual rankings posted record-setting gains in 2022, with one agency shattering the billion-dollar mark. Almost half of the 148 firms ranked this year pounded out gains of at least 20 percent.

By Kevin McCauley

Independent PR firms posted an 18.2 percent rise in fee income to \$4.6 billion in 2022, according to the 2023 *O'Dwyer's* rankings.

That increase lagged behind the 29.7 percent growth recorded in 2021 as firms sharply rebounded from the hard-pressed 2020 pandemic year.

Full-time employment jumped eight percent in 2022 vs. a 28.1 percent rise in 2021.

Sixty-eight of the 148 ranked firms chalked up 2022 gains of at least 20 percent.

Wachsman led the pack among the Top 50 firms as fee income surged 81.8 percent to \$25.4 million.

Spectrum (+64.1 percent to \$80.2 million), Bospar (+46.7 percent to \$18.2 million), Marathon Strategies (+41.6 percent to \$19.9 million) and J Public Relations (+41.2 percent to \$17.1 million) ranked as the next biggest gainers.

Edelman shatters the \$1 billion mark

Edelman recorded 9.6 percent growth to \$1.08 billion in 2022 to become the first PR firm to crack the \$1 billion in annual fee income mark.

The firm fell a tad short of the billion in 2021 as revenues clocked in at \$985 million.

Richard Edelman's shop recorded growth in all regions. The U.S. was up 13.8 percent, EMEA grew 11.9 percent, Canada rose 7.2 percent, Latin America advanced 41.5 percent and APAC inched ahead by 4.8 percent.

The firm made some notable hires during 2022, which was Edelman's 70th anniversary year.

It added Warren Fernandez as CEO Edelman Asia Pacific; Soni Basi, Chief People Officer; Radina Russell, Atlanta General Manager; and Everett Eissenstat, North America Chair and Global Trade Lead for Edelman Global Advisory.

Edelman views his firm's commitment and investment in Trust to be the shop's differentiator, greatest asset and highest value proposition.

The Edelman Trust Institute launched 10 reports/analyses on trust in the workplace, climate change, racial justice and brand trust during the past year.

It also probed new areas such as the role of business in tackling geopolitics, healthcare equity, and technology and innovation.



Richard Edelman

Real Chemistry crosses half-billion mark

San Francisco-based Real Chemistry recorded 17 percent growth to \$555 million in fee income, which marked its 21st consecutive year of double-digit revenues.

Shankar Narayanan, CEO, said crossing the half-billion-dollar threshold is a significant milestone for the company but added that more than revenue growth drives the firm.

"It's the spirit of unparalleled innovation which gives us insights and integrated capabilities across the entire spectrum of services needed by our clients," said Narayanan. "With the power to continue to innovate at scale and serve as the leading partner of choice for our clients, we are well positioned to drive our next decade of growth."

During 2022, Real Chemistry experienced as much as 50 percent growth in categories that reflect emerging client needs and the company's expanded mix of franchises: data and AI products and services, market access, medical affairs and influencer and celebrity.

"Our continued focus on and investment in data and AI-driven products and services ensure we can deliver impact and value to our clients as they navigate an increasingly complex and evolving economic environment," added Narayanan.

"Our focus, investment and growth in these areas will continue to bear fruit in 2023 and beyond."

Purpose drives Finn Partners

CEO Peter Finn said when he founded Finn Partners more than a decade ago, his vision was to build "a world-class, best-place-to-work agency with a heart and conscience."

He credits that sense of purpose for fuel-



Shankar Narayanan

ing growth, attracting top talent and acquisitions and winning new clients.

In 2022, Finn Partners achieved double-digit growth, hitting \$196.8 million in revenues, a 21.5 percent increase, with 1,400 people across 33 offices on three continents.

It grew organically by 13 percent with the additional 8.5 percent coming from four strategic acquisitions (SPAG, AHA, Rachel Kay PR and Winston Agency).

Finn Partners' collaborative engagements accelerated with 50 percent of clients working with two or more practice groups or offices, and strategic relationships deepened, with 27 clients whose 2022 fees exceeded \$1 million.

The shop launched two new practices during 2022. The brand innovation and transformation practice helps clients navigate rising complexity, rapid digital transformation and need for omnichannel marketing solutions. The global employee engagement practice counsels clients as they grapple with the fundamental changes to the employer-employee relationship.

Finn said the firm in 2022 deepened its commitment to tackling systemic inequities in healthcare—from decentralized clinical trials to improving access and outcomes in underserved black communities, and taking on global public health conversations in rural America and developing nations.

Wall Street woes hit ICR

Financial communications firm ICR suffered a 17.4 percent drop in fee income to \$161 million due to Wall Street's wobbly performance.

CEO Tom Ryan said ICR's revenues surged nearly 90 percent in 2021, driven by retainer fee growth but also from one-time fees associated with transactions, mainly IPOs and SPACs.

"In 2022, the historic drought in transactions meant that ICR could not re-create those one-time fees, despite the fact that retainers grew by approximately 20 percent," said Ryan.

The combination of these factors led to year-over-year results falling for only the second time in the firm's 25-year history.

Ryan did see progress in 2022, including the full integration of more than 150 people



Peter Finn



O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms, pg. 52



Tom Ryan

ple added in the previous year, expansion of its ESG team and the launch of the investor access and event management business.

ICR made important senior hires in its special situations group, strengthened global relationships including on the ground in India,

and improved its ability to leverage data and intelligence to better serve clients.

“With a record backlog of IPO and other transaction candidates in the pipeline, ICR is incredibly well positioned to reaccelerate its top line in 2023 and 2024 as capital markets activity normalizes,” said Ryan.

RF’s momentum carries into 75th year

Ruder Finn is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year following a robust performance in 2022 as fee income soared 42.7 percent to \$160 million.

CEO Kathy Bloomgarden’s “what’s next” in communications strategy—focused on technology & innovation, health & wellness, leadership & workplace, and consumer connections—has enabled the firm to double in size since 2019.

The New York-based shop expanded its capabilities via its RF TechLab, creative studios and digital integration group.

On the international front, Bloomgarden is exploring promising markets in the Middle East and boosting its 15-office network in Asia.



Kathy Bloomgarden

RF in 2022 acquired Peppercomm, which added a humor-based communications element to the firm; RF Comunicad, multicultural shop with strong roots in the Hispanic community; and Touchdown, a technology shop with a robust presence in Austin and

key European markets.

G&S simplifies complex stories

G&S Business Communications enjoyed a 15.4 percent boost in revenues to \$28.6 million.

Luke Lambert, President and CEO, attributes the strong performance in 2022 to impressive organic growth from long-standing clients and a number of new business wins in the advanced manufacturing, professional services and home and building markets.

He also said the continued build-out of the agency’s full-service offering and its integration into client programs was a catalyst for growth.



O’Dwyer’s rankings of top gainers, pg. 55

“Clients are looking for a partner with a deep understanding of their business and the ability to be a seamless extension of both their marketing and communications teams,” said Lambert. “Many companies are tackling big issues and want to work with professionals they trust to bring them a forward-looking view. Add to this our ability to seamlessly execute across all of their key channels and media outlets to make their strategies a reality, and you have something powerful.”

G&S realized the first full year of its new paid media buying service, which quickly ramped up to generate four percent of the shop’s fees in 2022.

It expanded its digital offering to include new analytics capabilities geared toward the key B2B segments it serves.

Lambert said the firm’s knack of helping to simplify complex stories to get clients noticed paid off in 2022.

Fully remote Bospar grows 46.7%

Bospar countered the downturn in the tech sector by growing 46.7 percent to \$18.2 million in 2022.

CEO Curtis Sparrer has forged a path that has evolved Bospar from its tech PR foundation into a full-service marketing and communications shop with about 100 clients.

As PR shops embraced remote work during the pandemic, Bospar is an old veteran at the away-from-the-office strategy.

“Bospar delivers PR and marketing expertise across sectors by eliminating geographic barriers—we’ve been a fully remote agency since our launch in 2015,” said Sparrer. “Without sinking money into buildings, we can invest in the best people the market offers.”

Sparrer said the firm is deeply committed



Luke Lambert

to providing employees a supportive environment where they can feel valued and reach their maximum professional potential.

“In 2022, we extended our guardrails against overwork and created development opportunities, extending paid holidays and summer Fridays year-round and launching a formal management training and performance management program,” he said.

Bospar also chalked up numerous social justice awards in 2022 for championing women’s rights and the LGBTQIA+ community.

FIWIV celebrates quarter century

French|West|Vaughan, which is based in Raleigh, celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2022 by recording its 25th consecutive year of annual growth.

The firm posted a two percent increase in fee income to \$37.5 million, which excludes revenue from its New York-based affiliate AMP3 PR, which reports to O’Dwyer’s separately.

Major account wins across F|W|V’s agency network include the American Pet Products Association, Woolmark, outdoor retailer Moosejaw, BOA Nutrition, basketball superstar Steph Curry’s Underrated Golf Tour, Hyer Boots, TFS HealthScience, and Samsung.

“2022 was a year of managed growth across the F|W|V network,” said CEO Rick French. “High expenses to on-board new team members began to outpace revenue gains, so we decided to slow down and focus our resources on associates and existing clients, while mapping an aggressive growth strategy for 2023.”

French added that he and agency principals David Gwyn and Natalie Best also elected to celebrate the agency’s quarter-century milestone by providing more than \$250,000 in cash and an equal amount in pro-bono support to non-profit organizations supported by its associates.

Those organizations include Teen Cancer America, Make-A-Wish, the UCLA Health Foundation, the Ride for Mental Health and several hunger relief organizations.

F|W|V closed out 2022 with the December 30 acquisition of The Millersch Group, a metro-Detroit area PR firm specializing in the global mobility, electrification and manufacturing sectors and serving clients such as Mitsubishi Electric, Eaton Corporation, LG Electronics and Hercules Electric Mobility.



Rick French

Continued on page 50

Coyne PR achieves milestones

Tom Coyne said his Parsippany, NJ-based shop achieved record-setting milestones in 2022 from revenue to retention to recognition.

Coyne PR grew nine percent to clock in at \$39 million in fee income for the year.

Retention rate hit a robust 86 percent due to the roll-out of the “Better 2Gether,” a new hybrid work model that combines the best parts of working together and remotely.

“Anything is possible when you care about your team as people,” said Coyne. “We focused on what employees wanted as well as what they needed.”

The firm also captured accolades from the trade press, lauding it among the best workplaces in the business.



Tom Coyne

“We believe this will always be a people business, so we always put our people, clients, and employees first,” said Coyne.

During the year, Coyne College was expanded to include a five-week training boot camp for junior employees, virtual library of training videos, and

mentorship program.

Coyne PR also implemented AI-driven solutions to streamline processes and improve outcomes with media monitoring, target list development, writing/editing materials, developing social content, and providing analytics on content performance.

Zeno works toward something better

Zeno Group registered 18.4 percent growth in revenues to \$138.4 million, sparked by upswings in demand for employee engagement, purpose + impact, and analytics services.

CEO Barby Siegel secured more than 40 major client wins, such as Kraft-Heinz, Peloton, U.S. Olympic Paralympic Committee, Bristol Myers Squibb, CDC Foundation, and ALDI grocery chain.

Her effort to position the firm at the intersection of ambition and humanity to achieve something better for humankind and each other, led to the release of the inaugural ESG report, “Toward Something Better.”

Zeno conducted an environmental footprint audit to inform its global sustainability strategy launching in 2023 and created Eco Crews in 11 cities worldwide to help reduce environmental impact.

The firm made a strategic investment in

minority owned EGAMI Group, which helped it double its headcount and revenues.

The partnership with EGAMI enriched Zeno’s understanding of the complex multicultural communications landscape and what it takes to run and grow a Black-owned business.



Barby Siegel

Zeno also bolstered its commitment to its “Be Kind to Your Mind” effort to help staffers openly advocate and care for their mental health.

After adding World Mental Health Day as a paid holiday, Zeno is building a global network of certified Mental Health First Aiders trained to conduct supportive, non-judgmental conversations.

Siegel is proud of the firm’s record 13 years of double-digit growth but says, “We will grow, but never lose our soul.”

5WPR posts 25.9% growth

5WPR celebrated its 20th year in business with a 25.9 percent increase in fee income to \$62.9 million in 2022.

On the new business front, 5WPR added Boomerang, G-SHOCK, Cirrus Nexus, and Lenox to its roster which includes marquee brands SMEG and Samsung SmartThings.

Co-CEOs Dara Busch and Matt Caiola led the firm to be named to Inc. magazine’s annual Best Workplaces list and launched the 5W Impact Team, a new employee-driven initiative to offer pro bono services and promote volunteerism for staff-nominated causes.

“The idea for the program originated at the staff level and is already generating a ton of excitement and interest across the board. It’s inspiring to see how passionate our team is about helping others,” said Caiola.

5W Cares, an extension of the impact team, organizes staff across all agency departments to support local non-profit organizations via other channels and methods.

The firm expanded its leadership team, elevating five executive VPs to the new role of managing partner, where they will oversee the agency’s core business units.

It added multiple c-suite and executive



Dara Busch and Matt Caiola

hires, including chief people officer Erica Kirwin from BBH USA, and executive VPs Paul Miser from Icreon and Elizabeth Min-ton, who returned from Clarity.

Racepoint drives flexibility-first culture

Racepoint Global’s 2022 fee income advanced six percent to \$11 million as the tech firm experienced strong performances in the areas of talent and culture, new business and organic growth.

“RPG’s investments in our flexibility-first culture resulted in industry-leading retention and high employee Net Promoter Scores,” said President Bob Osmond.

The firm’s average client tenure is five years and organic growth accounted for 35 percent of new revenue during 2022.

Osmond said RPG attracts a diverse portfolio of tech-forward clients through its human-centered storytelling that influences, engages and reaches buyers wherever they are.

The firm added Analog Devices, Hummingbird, Intelsat and SiFive to its roster in 2022.

The firm is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. “We will continue to support our clients as they communicate accountability related to purpose and ESG, focus on employee communications and embrace executive thought leadership,” said Osmond. “We are ready to shape conversations that matter for tech-forward brands for decades to come.”

Stanton registers record year

Stanton, the New York-based financial PR firm, reached the highest revenue level in its history, moved into expanded new offices and continued to add senior, experienced talent to the team during 2022.

It posted a 23.4 percent hike in revenues to \$10.5 million.

Alex Stanton said exceptional client service—informed, strategic counsel combined with expert tactical execution—is the mainstay of firm’s success and core to the firm’s value proposition.

“Our track record, experience and team in financial and investor communications, private capital, and alternative asset management is unparalleled and continues to fuel our business,” he said.

He said the shop’s opportunity “continues to be working with clients who want sea-



Bob Osmond



Alex Stanton

soned, senior level communications professionals working on their business day-to-day and thinking strategically about how to help move them forward every day.”

The firm is also executing more digital, design and marketing work across its client base as the firm is in a prime position to create a unified, seamless, client-centric experience across channels and activities.

Hoffman agency rethinks PR

The Hoffman Agency chalked up 30.7 percent growth in 2022 to \$26.3 million.

Lou Hoffman credits some of that success to the pandemic year of 2020 when the shop redefined what it means to be a global communications consultancy in today’s world.

During 2022, LHA doubled down on giving staff a voice in shaping the shop’s “employee experience,” established a global talent marketing, acquisition, and branding practice; revamped its website to showcase the ability to solve specific pain points as well as accentuate differentiation; and distilled culture to “Geeks @ Heart,” kicking off a campaign to both cultivate staff pride and amplify the firm’s expertise in tech.

The promotion of Caroline Hsu into the newly created role of chief global officer formally framed the firm’s ethos of ONE team (regardless of geography).

“This is about more than a single global P/L; it’s a mentality embraced by the consultancy’s senior leaders and staff who recognize that global success lifts everyone,”

said Hoffman. “The tangible payoff came in the form of new-business wins, retaining global accounts and extending current clients into new markets.”

Major client wins in 2022 included Oracle, Visa, Dropbox, Trello, Bosch and Slack.



Lou Hoffman

LHA also advocated for PR in colleges serving diverse communities. It zeroed in on the California community college system (1.8 million students; 70 percent from BIPOC communities) to evangelize the

benefits of a career in communications.

The Bliss Group makes move to new HQ

The Bliss Group posted 25.7 percent growth to \$20.8 million, a performance that includes the acquisition of NextTech Communications.

It moved from 500 Fifth Ave. after a 25-year run to the historic Helmsley Building at 230 Park Ave. under a 10-year lease. The expanded HQ features a swath of on-site capabilities that give teams and clients a collaborative space to innovate and make an impact on the firm’s clients and the communities they serve.

During 2022, TBG launched a workplace specialty group to help clients reach C-suite, HR managers, employee benefits

decision makers and benefits brokers at the intersection of the future of work and employee experience.

Bliss Impact, which launched in Fall 2021 to provide counsel, campaign management and collaboration to clients seeking to align strategic priorities and sustainable programs with societal change, experienced significant momentum in 2022, expanding its client roster and ramping up growth.

Working closely with the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and Department of Defense as part of Operation Warp Speed, TBG and The Next Practices Group launched “CTRx Pathways” to repair, accelerate, and diversify clinical trial enrollment through a mathematical, PESO media, and marketing standpoint.

TBG kicked off 2023 by naming Cortney Stapleton as its new CEO, while Bob Pearson, who was the firm’s CEO, was appointed Chair.

“I am thankful to our team at Bliss and our clients, who make it possible for us to create value and build relationships that are long-lasting,” said Stapleton. “With 100 team members and growing, it is more important than ever for our focus to center on how to build meaningful careers, as well as practices.”



Cortney Stapleton

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O'DWYER'S RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS WITH MAJOR U.S. OPERATIONS

Firm	2022 Net Fees	FT Employees	% Change from 2021
1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$1,079,738,000	6,376	12.8
2. Real Chemistry , San Francisco, CA	555,000,000	2,000	17
3. Evoke , Philadelphia, PA	368,000,000	1,432	16.5
4. Finn Partners , New York, NY	196,800,000	1,225	21
5. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	180,400,000	1,049	4.6
6. ICR , New York, NY	160,924,727	363	-17.4
7. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	160,100,000	296	42.7
8. Zeno Group , New York, NY	138,429,580	797	18.4
9. Prosek Partners , New York, NY	91,650,000	335	14.5
10. Spectrum , Washington, DC	80,174,000	303	64.1
11. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	62,922,235	278	25.9
12. Hotwire , New York, NY	59,715,022	430	24
13. MikeWorldWide , New York, NY	53,093,000	227	17
14. Hunter , New York, NY	51,200,000	247	21
15. Padilla , Minneapolis, MN	50,774,739	229	1.6
16. imre, LLC , Baltimore, MD	43,121,000	200	-4.3
17. Fahlgren Mortine (includes TURNER) , Columbus, OH	39,538,203	229	31.6
18. Kivvit , Chicago, IL	39,537,491	145	even
19. Matter Communications , Boston, MA	39,525,000	275	31.2
20. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	39,094,881	189	9
21. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	37,461,997	134	2
22. Citizen Relations , Los Angeles, CA	35,110,000	235	21
23. Havas Formula , New York, NY	34,449,153	118	28.9
24. Highwire PR , San Francisco, CA	34,007,410	132	16.3
25. PAN Communications , Boston, MA	31,486,207	192	18
26. Walker Sands , Chicago, IL	30,502,958	175	7.1
27. Crosby , Annapolis, MD	30,383,072	110	3.3
28. G&S Business Communications , New York, NY	28,618,303	160	15.4
29. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	28,010,653	147	16.5
30. Inkhouse , Waltham, MA	27,258,870	149	10
31. Taylor , New York, NY	26,518,857	103	20
32. Hoffman Agency, The , San Jose, CA	26,344,000	55	30.7
33. Wachsman , New York, NY	25,371,403	155	81.8
34. Vested , New York, NY	23,811,000	84	35.7
35. M Booth Health , New York, NY	21,811,192	65	30
36. Bliss Group, The , New York, NY	20,832,618	95	25.7
37. Lambert , Grand Rapids, MI	20,233,000	92	21.4
38. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	20,143,895	124	9.9
39. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	20,072,978	120	23.2
40. Regan Communications Group , Boston, MA	20,057,341	118	4.8
41. JPA Health , Washington, DC	19,965,000	91	38.8
42. Marathon Strategies , New York, NY	19,835,713	64	41.6
43. Zimmerman Agency , Tallahassee, FL	18,900,000	52	17
44. Bospar , San Francisco, CA	18,201,039	98	46.7
45. J Public Relations , New York, NY	17,112,000	100	41.2
46. Clarity , New York, NY	16,972,073	19	10.5
47. Merritt Group , McLean, VA	15,444,080	70	16.8
48. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	14,296,371	78	2.5
49. Cognito , New York, NY	13,120,158	84	15.8
50. Moore, Inc. , Tallahassee, FL	11,847,168	54	11.4
51. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	11,754,884	65	6.4
52. Davies , Santa Barbara, CA	11,750,000	35	5
53. Sam Brown Inc. , Wayne, PA	11,428,977	22	17.6
54. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	11,068,363	33	50
55. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	11,030,000	51	6
56. 360PR+ , Boston, MA	11,008,832	59	9.5
57. Stanton , New York, NY	10,476,397	38	23.4
58. Greentarget Global LLC , Chicago, IL	9,945,600	46	9
59. MMGY NJF , New York, NY	9,510,162	46	5.7
60. Dukas Linden Public Relations , New York, NY	9,380,205	31	10.2
61. Lou Hammond Group , New York, NY	9,068,858	45	6
62. Berk Communications , New York, NY	9,000,422	34	6
63. SourceCode Communications , New York, NY	8,831,000	39	4.2
64. Infinite Global , New York, NY	8,523,266	40	16.4
65. Health+Commerce , Eagle, ID	8,023,637	31	10.6
66. V2 Communications , Boston, MA	7,806,842	34	4.3
67. Raffetto Herman Strategic Communications , Seattle, WA	7,755,001	41	24.8
68. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	7,722,554	33	8.6
69. Fiona Hutton & Associates, Inc. , Los Angeles, CA	7,668,627	24	27.3
70. IW Group, Inc. , West Hollywood, CA	7,247,762	14	82
71. Sachs Media , Tallahassee, FL	7,126,561	36	7.7
72. Singer Associates Public Relations, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	6,714,990	19	40.7
73. Communications Strategy Group (CSG) , Denver, CO	6,573,186	43	23.2
74. TruePoint Communications , Dallas, TX	6,227,337	29	18.7

O'DWYER'S RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS WITH MAJOR U.S. OPERATIONS

Firm	2022 Net Fees	FT Employees	% Change from 2021
75. Caliber Corporate Advisers, New York, NY	\$6,215,314	37	47.1
76. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	5,908,956	43	26
77. Lee Andrews Group, Los Angeles, CA	5,851,973	28	50.5
78. LaVoie Health Science, Boston, MA	5,752,399	17	0.4
79. BackBay Communications, Boston, MA	5,750,365	36	28.6
80. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	5,680,586	25	28.4
81. Crenshaw Communications, New York, NY	5,536,338	22	50.1
82. Kiterocket, Phoenix, AZ	5,483,520	34	17.7
83. Fish Consulting, Fort Lauderdale, FL	5,443,000	23	8
84. Rasky Partners, Inc., Boston, MA	5,305,038	25	11.3
85. L.C. Williams & Associates, Chicago, IL	4,861,977	22	5.4
86. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	4,800,000	20	4.2
87. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	4,792,596	33	2.5
88. Zapwater Communications, Inc., Chicago, IL	4,575,450	36	42.9
89. Forefront Communications, New York, NY	4,560,667	11	37.2
90. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	4,500,000	12	21.6
91. CashmanKatz, Glastonbury, CT	4,365,000	26	12.4
92. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	4,315,911	40	82.5
93. The Sway Effect, New York, NY	4,200,000	15	25
94. Inspire PR Group, Westerville, OH	4,126,000	18	25.8
95. Franco, Detroit, MI	3,827,609	30	17
96. Idea Grove, Dallas, TX	3,824,623	39	1.6
97. MCS Healthcare Public Relations, Bedminster, NJ	3,722,106	15	3.8
98. BRG Communications, Alexandria, VA	3,708,055	18	9.8
99. Tier One Partners, Boston, MA	3,665,811	25	1.1
100. BoardroomPR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	3,600,000	18	6
101. Treble PR, Austin, TX	3,586,231	18	63.2
102. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	3,516,958	18	14
103. Alloy, Atlanta, GA	3,467,326	27	5.3
104. Bellmont Partners, Minneapolis, MN	3,404,528	17	48.5
105. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	3,343,251	14	11.4
106. Slide Nine Agency, Columbus, OH	3,264,357	21	21
107. Karbo Communications, San Francisco, CA	3,155,705	34	27
108. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	3,142,543	19	3
109. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	3,035,741	19	1.6
110. The TASC Group, New York, NY	3,003,153	22	21.4
111. Gatesman, Pittsburgh, PA	2,910,482	32	27.9
112. Perry Communications Group, Inc., Sacramento, CA	2,674,124	11	5.4
113. Hewes Communications, New York, NY	2,640,744	6	-4.5
114. Ripp Media/Public Relations, Inc., New York, NY	2,600,000	7	30
115. Stanton Communications, Washington, DC	2,560,426	12	24.9
116. Akrete, Evanston, IL	2,387,986	7	46.1
117. Victorious PR, Las Vegas, NV	2,274,229	6	even
118. Virgo PR, New York, NY	2,200,000	9	120
119. Rally Point Public Relations, New York, NY	2,132,124	10	37.7
120. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	2,070,705	65	-5.2
121. Landis Communications, San Francisco, CA	1,993,000	6	14.5
122. PSC (Princeton Strategic Communications), Trenton, NJ	1,933,703	13	33.2
123. Marketing Maven Public Relations, Camarillo, CA	1,907,592	13	40.3
124. Firecracker PR, Brea, CA	1,898,000	10	27.9
125. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	1,773,516	7	-2.1
126. BizCom Associates, Plano, TX	1,752,668	22	37.6
127. Milk & Honey PR, New York, NY	1,738,922	6	286.7
128. AMP3 Public Relations, New York, NY	1,703,813	12	6.1
129. Rosica Communications, Fair Lawn, NJ	1,670,000	7	57.3
130. Violet PR, Montclair, NJ	1,651,925	10	58.8
131. Lowe Group, Wauwatosa, WI	1,611,227	7	18.5
132. Hemsworth Communications, Fort Lauderdale, FL	1,607,528	20	48.8
133. Butler Associates, LLC, New York, NY	1,496,931	6	12.3
134. Buttonwood Communications Group, New York, NY	1,484,579	7	33.9
135. CommCentric Solutions, Inc., Tampa, FL	1,416,120	8	50.7
136. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	1,405,061	8	15.5
137. Pineapple Public Relations, Chamblee, GA	1,382,009	12	39.9
138. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	1,347,264	5	19.4
139. Hoyt Organization Inc., The, Torrance, CA	1,200,000	7	29.7
140. WordWrite Communications LLC, Pittsburgh, PA	1,139,925	8	-11.6
141. Bianchi Public Relations, Troy, MI	1,107,347	4	34.7
142. Stuntman PR, New York, NY	1,092,137	9	35.3
143. Superior PR, Chicago, IL	1,049,731	5	-3
144. Feintuch Communications, New York, NY	1,000,894	3	41
145. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	643,582	6	-9.2
146. Pugh & Tiller PR, LLC, Annapolis, MD	600,741	3	27.9
147. Wordhampton Public Relations, Inc., East Hampton, NY	582,194	4	2.2
148. Press Record Communications, New York, NY	574,804	1	7.3

Philanthropic ventures take center stage

Nonprofits and philanthropists have a unique opportunity to take ownership of conversations surrounding pressing social issues.

By Amy Terpeluk

Philanthropic ventures have always been essential in addressing pressing issues. From climate change to social justice to expanding opportunity for historically underserved populations, when government and businesses have been slow to act, there has always been a place for philanthropists and their organizations. Today, corporate leaders have become increasingly reticent to speak out about social issues in the face of modern political divisiveness. As a result, nonprofits and philanthropists have a unique opportunity—and indeed, a responsibility—to take ownership of critical societal conversations.

Threading the corporate responsibility needle

Understanding why corporate leaders have become wary when tackling pressing social issues is important. The political landscape is increasingly polarized, with issues such as climate change, inequality, and immigration becoming highly tribal in response. Corporate leaders may fear that taking a stand on these issues might alienate a significant portion of their customer base, and they wish to avoid the backlash that might result at all costs. Additionally, corporate leaders are under pressure to maximize shareholder value and need a defensible position on ESG commitments and outcomes.

However, these concerns should be balanced against businesses' broader responsibilities to society. Consider that companies significantly impact the communities in which they operate, and they have the power and resources to effect positive change that other pillars of society might lack. One company alone cannot solve for these complicated environmental and social issues, and corporate action catalyzes social investments from more businesses. But the fact is that communications on socially responsible investments are a crucial piece of the puzzle, and even if corporations are taking action if they're not speaking about it out of fear or complacency, they won't reap the benefits.

Purpose can't become only an internal narrative.

The role of philanthropic ventures

This is where philanthropic ventures come in. Unlike companies, philanthropic ventures do not have to worry about alienating customers or maximizing shareholder value. Yes, they're beholden to boards, but

their reason for existence is to create a positive social impact. Philanthropic ventures can work collaboratively with companies, governments, and civil organizations to activate innovative solutions to social challenges across the entire spectrum of society.

Moreover, philanthropic ventures are often more flexible and agile than companies, able to pivot quickly to address emerging issues and respond to changing circumstances. This makes them well-suited to tackling the pressing social issues facing our society. Even those associated with major companies might be able to tread ground that might not fit with the sister corporation's ethos. Consider the Gates Foundation, which focuses on improving global health and reducing poverty. It's naturally associated with Microsoft via the founders, Bill and Melinda. Still, through partnerships with governments, NGOs and other stakeholders, the foundation has made significant progress in eradicating polio, reducing maternal and child mortality and improving access to education entirely separate from Microsoft itself.

However, philanthropic ventures—particularly truly independent ones—face their challenges. For one thing, from a funding standpoint, they are often under-resourced and lack the institutional support that companies enjoy. They also must navigate a complex landscape of regulatory and legal requirements, making gaining traction in a crowded activist ecosystem difficult.

Nevertheless, philanthropic ventures have a unique opportunity to take ownership of solving social issues and to fill the conversation void left by reticent corporate leaders. There are a few strategies to consider:

Collaboration and partnership. One of the most effective ways philanthropic ventures can address pressing social issues is by highlighting collaboration with other organizations, including companies. By working together, they can pool their resources and expertise, achieving a more significant impact than they could on their own. Suppose companies are hesitant to take credit for the effort. In that case, nonprofits can step up and drive the impact narrative—building awareness to spur funding and building credibility for the corporate partner investing in the programs.

Advocacy and policy change. Another way philanthropic ventures can take ownership of solving social issues is by engag-

ing in advocacy work and promoting policy change. While companies may be reticent about taking a stance on controversial issues, philanthropic ventures can speak out and unapologetically advocate for the change they're on the frontlines creating.

Direct action. Finally, philanthropic ventures can directly address pressing social issues in innovative ways—and communicate about both successes and programmatic challenges. Nonprofits as social incubators can lead the debate over what's—working and what's not—and transparently why.

For example, a philanthropic venture focused on addressing homelessness could provide shelter and support services to those in need while liaising with local and state governments to help alleviate the homelessness crisis through new legislation or regulations.

Ultimately, the world needs difference-makers, no matter where they come from. The realm of philanthropy is a familiar frontier in the fight for a more just, equitable and sustainable world. Still, it's in a position now, with increased political polarization and other factors, to take center stage.

Philanthropic ventures can be bold and creative and can take risks in a way that corporations either can't or won't, and with the size and scope of the problems we face, that's precisely what's needed.

Amy Terpeluk is Managing Partner at Finn Partners. ○



Amy Terpeluk

PR brief

C Street walks David's Bridal down chapter 11 aisle

C Street Advisory Group handles David's Bridal as the wedding dress retailer files for its second bankruptcy in five years and fires more than 9,200 workers.

David's Bridal, which boasts of being the "only omni-channel bridal retailer of scale in the U.S." plans to keep its stores open as it searches for a buyer that can operate the business going forward.

The company blames inflation, increased online competition and the shift to more casual weddings among reasons for its latest financial downfall.

CEO James Marcum said David's Bridal "has successfully modernized our marketing and customer interaction processes and driven our retail service levels to best in class."

The company is determined to focus on the future because it believes it plays "an important role in ensuring that every bride, no matter her budget, can have her perfect dress."

One in four of U.S. brides buys her gown at David's Bridal.

LEADING GAINERS AMONG PR FIRMS

Firm	2022 Net Fees	FT Employees	% Change from 2021
Firms in the top 25 (representing fees from \$31.5M to \$1.08B)			
1. Spectrum , Washington, DC	\$80,174,000	303	+64.1
2. Ruder Finn Inc. , New York, NY	160,100,000	1,140	+42.7
3. Fahlgren Mortine (includes TURNER), Columbus, OH	39,538,203	229	+31.6
4. Matter Communications , Boston, MA	39,525,000	275	+31.2
5. Havas Formula , New York, NY	34,449,153	118	+28.9
6. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	62,922,235	278	+25.9
7. Hotwire , New York, NY	59,715,022	430	+24
8. Finn Partners , New York, NY	196,800,000	1,225	+21
9. Hunter , New York, NY	51,200,000	247	+21
10. Citizen Relations , Los Angeles, CA	35,110,000	235	+21
Firms ranked 26 through 50 (representing fees from \$11.8M to \$30.5M)			
1. Wachsman , New York, NY	\$25,371,403	155	+81.8
2. Bospar , San Francisco, CA	18,201,039	98	+46.7
3. Marathon Strategies , New York, NY	19,835,713	64	+41.6
4. J Public Relations , New York, NY	17,112,000	100	+41.2
5. JPA Health , Washington, DC	19,965,000	91	+38.8
6. Vested , New York, NY	23,811,000	84	+35.7
7. Hoffman Agency, The , San Jose, CA	26,344,000	55	+30.7
8. M Booth Health , New York, NY	21,811,192	65	+30
9. Bliss Group, The , New York, NY	20,832,618	95	+25.7
10. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	20,072,978	120	+23.2
Firms ranked 51 through 100 (representing fees from \$3.6M to \$11.8M)			
1. Otter PR , St. Petersburg, FL	\$4,315,911	40	+82.5
2. IW Group, Inc. , West Hollywood, CA	7,247,762	14	+82
3. Lee Andrews Group , Los Angeles, CA	5,851,973	28	+50.5
4. Crenshaw Communications , New York, NY	5,536,338	22	+50.1
5. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	11,068,363	33	+50
6. Caliber Corporate Advisers , New York, NY	6,215,314	37	+47.1
7. Zapwater Communications, Inc. , Chicago, IL	4,575,450	36	+42.9
8. Singer Associates PR, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	6,714,990	19	+40.7
9. Forefront Communications , New York, NY	4,560,667	11	+37.2
10. BackBay Communications , Boston, MA	5,750,365	36	+28.6
Firms ranked 101 through 148 (representing fees from \$575K to \$3.6M)			
1. Milk & Honey PR , New York, NY	\$1,738,922	6	+286.7
2. Virgo PR , New York, NY	2,200,000	9	+120
3. Treble PR , Austin, TX	3,586,231	18	+63.2
4. Violet PR , Montclair, NJ	1,651,925	10	+58.8
5. Rosica Communications , Fair Lawn, NJ	1,670,000	7	+57.3
6. CommCentric Solutions, Inc. , Tampa, FL	1,416,120	8	+50.7
7. Hemsworth Communications , Fort Lauderdale, FL	1,607,528	20	+48.8
8. Bellmont Partners , Minneapolis, MN	3,404,528	17	+48.5
9. Akrete , Evanston, IL	2,387,986	7	+46.1
10. Feintuch Communications , New York, NY	1,000,894	3	+41

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS BY CITY/GEOGRAPHY.

Firm	2022 Net Fees	FT Empl.	Firm	2022 Net Fees	FT Empl.
ATLANTA					
1. Jackson Spalding	\$28,010,653	147	5. Crosby, Annapolis, MD	\$30,383,072	110
2. Edelman	21,129,000	121	6. JPA Health	19,965,000	91
3. Trevelino/Keller	7,722,554	33	7. Merritt Group, McLean, VA	15,444,080	70
4. Alloy	3,467,326	27	8. Finn Partners	13,800,000	50
CONNECTICUT					
1. ICR, Norwalk, CT	\$35,096,064	69	9. Marathon Strategies	9,322,785	24
2. CashmanKatz, Glastonbury, CT	4,365,000	26	10. ICR, Baltimore, MD	6,505,312	16
CHICAGO					
1. Edelman	\$109,550,000	579	11. Kivvit	5,975,721	28
2. Walker Sands	30,502,958	175	12. BRG Communications, Alexandria, VA	3,708,055	18
3. Finn Partners (includes Detroit)	17,400,000	84	13. Stanton Communications	2,560,426	12
4. Kivvit	13,138,743	41	14. Pugh & Tiller PR, LLC, Annapolis, MD	600,741	3
5. Greentarget Global LLC	9,945,600	46	15. Infinite Global	426,163	21
6. APCO Worldwide	8,300,000	30	NEW YORK & NEW JERSEY		
7. G&S Business Communications	6,712,871	37	1. Edelman (includes Rochester)	\$272,388,000	1,168
8. L.C. Williams & Associates	4,861,977	22	2. Finn Partners	65,100,000	346
9. Public Communications Inc.	4,792,596	33	3. 5W Public Relations	62,922,235	278
10. Zapwater Communications, Inc.	4,575,450	36	4. ICR	56,771,934	116
11. Highwire PR	3,943,909	15	5. MikeWorldWide	53,093,000	227
12. Akrete	2,387,986	7	6. Hunter	51,200,000	247
13. O'Malley Hansen Communications	1,773,516	7	7. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	39,094,881	189
14. Tier One Partners	1,456,901	15	8. Taylor	26,518,857	103
15. Superior PR	1,049,731	5	9. Vested	23,811,000	84
16. Infinite Global	213,082	1	10. M Booth Health	21,811,192	65
FLORIDA					
1. Zimmerman Agency, Tallahassee, FL	\$18,900,000	52	11. Bliss Group, The	20,832,618	95
2. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	14,296,371	78	12. Kivvit	19,726,273	69
3. Moore, Inc., Tallahassee, FL	11,847,168	54	13. J Public Relations	17,112,000	100
4. Sachs Media, Tallahassee, FL	7,126,561	36	14. APCO Worldwide	15,600,000	86
5. Fish Consulting, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	5,443,000	23	15. Marathon Strategies	10,512,927	27
6. Edelman, Orlando, FL	4,493,000	15	16. Stanton	10,476,397	38
7. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	4,315,911	40	17. MMGY NJF	9,510,162	46
8. BoardroomPR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	3,600,000	18	18. Dukas Linden Public Relations	9,380,205	31
9. Zapwater Communications, Miami, FL	1,837,200	9	19. Highwire PR	9,278,661	36
10. Hemsworth Comms., Ft. Lauderdale, FL	1,607,528	20	20. Lou Hammond Group	9,068,858	45
11. CommCentric Solutions, Inc., Tampa, FL	1,416,120	8	21. Berk Communications	9,000,422	34
12. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	1,347,264	5	22. SourceCode Communications	8,831,000	39
13. Kivvit, Miami, FL	696,755	7	23. Clarity	7,577,808	19
MIAMI					
1. rbb Communications	\$14,296,371	78	24. G&S Business Communications	6,755,642	36
2. Edelman	6,789,000	35	25. Caliber Corporate Advisers	6,215,314	37
3. Zapwater Communications	1,837,200	9	26. Crenshaw Communications	5,536,338	22
4. Kivvit	696,755	7	27. Infinite Global	5,327,041	25
BOSTON					
1. PAN Communications	\$31,486,207	192	28. Forefront Communications	4,560,667	11
2. Inkhouse, Waltham, MA	27,258,870	149	29. The Sway Effect	4,200,000	15
3. Matter Communications	25,318,000	180	30. MCS Healthcare PR, Bedminster, NJ	3,722,106	15
4. Regan Communications Group	20,057,341	118	31. The TASC Group	3,003,153	22
5. Racepoint Global	11,030,000	51	32. Hewes Communications	2,640,744	6
6. 360PR+	11,008,832	59	33. Ripp Media/Public Relations, Inc.	2,600,000	7
7. V2 Communications	7,806,842	34	34. Virgo PR	2,200,000	9
8. Finn Partners	6,700,000	28	35. Rally Point Public Relations	2,132,124	10
9. LaVoie Health Science	5,752,399	17	36. PSC (Princeton Strategic Comms.), Trenton, NJ	1,933,703	13
10. BackBay Communications	5,750,365	36	37. Milk & Honey PR	1,738,922	6
11. Rasky Partners, Inc.	5,305,038	25	38. AMP3 Public Relations	1,703,813	12
12. Highwire PR	5,158,740	17	39. Rosica Communications, Fair Lawn, NJ	1,670,000	7
13. Tier One Partners	2,208,910	11	40. Violet PR, Montclair, NJ	1,651,925	10
WASHINGTON, D.C.					
1. Edelman	\$103,982,000	369	41. Butler Associates, LLC	1,496,931	6
2. Spectrum	80,174,000	303	42. Buttonwood Communications Group	1,484,579	7
3. APCO Worldwide	47,000,000	205	43. Stuntman PR	1,092,137	9
4. imre, LLC, Baltimore, MD	43,121,000	200	44. Feintuch Communications	1,000,894	3
PENNSYLVANIA					
1. Gregory FCA, Ardmore, PA	\$20,072,978	120	45. Lawlor Media Group	643,582	6
2. Sam Brown Inc., Wayne, PA	11,428,977	22	46. Wordhampton PR, Inc., East Hampton, NY	582,194	4
3. Red Thread PR, Philadelphia, PA	3,516,958	18	47. Press Record Communications	574,804	1
4. Gatesman, Pittsburgh, PA	2,910,482	32			
5. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	1,405,061	8			
6. WordWrite Comms. LLC, Pittsburgh, PA	1,139,925	8			

RANKINGS OF PR FIRMS BY CITY/GEOGRAPHY

Firm	2022 Net Fees	FT Empl.	Firm	2022 Net Fees	FT Empl.
MIDWEST CITIES			LOS ANGELES		
1. Edelman, Chicago, IL	\$109,550,000	579	1. Edelman (includes Beverly Hills)	\$59,316,000	253
2. Fahlgren Mortine (includes TURNER), Columbus, OH	39,538,203	229	2. Citizen Relations	35,110,000	235
3. Walker Sands, Chicago, IL	30,502,958	175	3. Davies, Santa Barbara, CA	11,750,000	35
4. Lambert, Grand Rapids, MI	20,233,000	92	4. Fiona Hutton & Associates, Inc.	7,668,627	24
5. Finn Partners (includes Detroit), Chicago, IL	17,400,000	84	5. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	7,247,762	14
6. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	13,138,743	41	6. Lee Andrews Group	5,851,973	28
7. Greentarget Global LLC, Chicago, IL	9,945,600	46	7. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	4,500,000	12
8. APCO Worldwide, Chicago, IL	8,300,000	30	8. Highwire PR	3,637,109	17
9. G&S Business Communications, Chicago, IL	6,712,871	37	9. Finn Partners	3,400,000	25
10. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	5,680,586	25	10. Marketing Maven PR, Camarillo, CA	1,907,592	13
11. L.C. Williams & Associates, Chicago, IL	4,861,977	22	11. Firecracker PR, Brea, CA	1,898,000	10
12. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	4,800,000	20	12. Hoyt Organization Inc., The, Torrance, CA	1,200,000	7
13. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	4,792,596	33	13. Zapwater Communications	964,995	4
14. Inspire PR Group, Westerville, OH	4,126,000	18	SAN FRANCISCO & NORTH CALIFORNIA		
15. Highwire PR, Chicago, IL	3,943,909	15	1. Edelman	\$43,679,000	170
16. Franco, Detroit, MI	3,827,609	30	2. Highwire PR	34,007,410	132
17. Belmont Partners, Minneapolis, MN	3,404,528	17	3. Hoffman Agency, The, San Jose, CA	26,344,000	55
18. Beehive Strategic Comm., St. Paul, MN	3,343,251	14	4. LaunchSquad	20,143,895	124
19. Slide Nine Agency, Columbus, OH	3,264,357	21	5. Bospar	18,201,039	98
20. Akrete, Evanston, IL	2,387,986	7	6. Singer Associates Public Relations, Inc.	6,714,990	19
21. Zapwater Comms., Inc., Chicago, IL	2,029,305	23	7. Finn Partners	5,600,000	27
22. O'Malley Hansen Comms., Chicago, IL	1,773,516	7	8. Edelman, Sacramento, CA	4,468,000	16
23. Lowe Group, Wauwatosa, WI	1,611,227	7	9. Karbo Communications	3,155,705	34
24. Bianchi Public Relations, Troy, MI	1,107,347	4	10. Perry Comms. Group, Inc., Sacramento, CA	2,674,124	11
25. Superior PR, Chicago, IL	1,049,731	5	11. Landis Communications	1,993,000	6
26. Infinite Global, Chicago, IL	213,082	11	12. Infinite Global	1,917,735	9
TEXAS			WESTERN CITIES		
1. Edelman (includes Dallas & Houston) Austin, TX	\$31,142,000	130	1. Edelman (includes Beverly Hills) Los Angeles, CA	\$59,316,000	253
2. Pierpont Communications, Houston, TX	11,068,363	33	2. Edelman, San Francisco, CA	43,679,000	170
3. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	6,227,337	29	3. Edelman, Seattle, WA	36,251,000	163
4. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	5,908,956	43	4. Citizen Relations, Los Angeles, CA	35,110,000	235
5. Idea Grove, Dallas, TX	3,824,623	39	5. Hoffman Agency, The, San Jose, CA	26,344,000	55
6. Treble PR, Austin, TX	3,586,231	18	6. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	20,143,895	124
7. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	3,035,741	19	7. Bospar, San Francisco, CA	18,201,039	98
8. BizCom Associates, Plano, TX	1,752,668	22	8. Finn Partners, Portland, OR	12,600,000	63
SOUTHEAST			9. Davies, Santa Barbara, CA	11,750,000	35
1. French West Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	\$37,461,997	134	10. Edelman, Portland, OR	10,190,000	45
2. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	28,010,653	147	11. Health+Commerce, Eagle, ID	8,023,637	31
3. Finn Partners (incl. Atlanta & Florida), Nashville, TN	24,400,000	114	12. Raffetto Herman Strategic Comms., Seattle, WA	7,755,001	41
4. Edelman, Atlanta, GA	21,129,000	121	13. Highwire PR, San Francisco, CA	7,369,932	32
5. Zimmerman Agency, Tallahassee, FL	18,900,000	52	14. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	7,247,762	14
6. G&S Business Comms., Raleigh, NC	15,149,790	87	15. Singer Associates PR, Inc., San Francisco, CA	6,714,990	19
7. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	14,296,371	78	16. Comms. Strategy Group (CSG), Denver, CO	6,573,186	43
8. Moore, Inc., Tallahassee, FL	11,847,168	54	17. Lee Andrews Group, Los Angeles, CA	5,851,973	28
9. MP&F Strategic Comms., Nashville, TN	11,754,884	65	18. Finn Partners, San Francisco, CA	5,600,000	27
10. APCO Worldwide, Raleigh, NC	11,000,000	47	19. APCO Worldwide (includes employee presence from CA to CO) Seattle, WA	5,500,000	32
11. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	7,722,554	33	20. Kiterocket, Phoenix, AZ	5,483,520	34
12. Sachs Media, Tallahassee, FL	7,126,561	36	21. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	4,500,000	12
13. Edelman, Miami, FL	6,789,000	35	22. Edelman, Sacramento, CA	4,468,000	16
14. Edelman, Orlando, FL	4,493,000	15	23. Highwire PR, Los Angeles, CA	3,637,109	17
15. Otter PR, St. Petersburg, FL	4,315,911	40	24. Finn Partners, San Diego, CA	3,400,000	9
16. BoardroomPR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	3,600,000	18	25. Finn Partners, Los Angeles, CA	3,400,000	25
17. Alloy, Atlanta, GA	3,467,326	27	26. Karbo Communications, San Francisco, CA	3,155,705	34
18. Ehrhardt Group, The, New Orleans, LA	3,142,543	19	27. Perry Comms. Group, Inc., Sacramento, CA	2,674,124	11
19. Zapwater Communications, Miami, FL	1,837,200	9	28. Finn Partners, Seattle, WA	2,300,000	5
20. Hemsworth Comms., Ft. Lauderdale, FL	1,607,528	20	29. Victorious PR, Las Vegas, NV	2,274,229	6
21. CommCentric Solutions, Inc., Tampa, FL	1,416,120	8	30. Lavidge, Phoenix, AZ	2,070,705	65
22. Pineapple Public Relations, Chamblee, GA	1,382,009	12	31. Landis Communications, San Francisco, CA	1,993,000	6
23. Judge Public Relations, Tampa, FL	1,347,264	5	32. Infinite Global, San Francisco, CA	1,917,735	9
24. Kivvit, Miami, FL	696,755	7	33. Marketing Maven PR, Camarillo, CA	1,907,592	13
HAWAII			34. Firecracker PR, Brea, CA	1,898,000	10
1. Finn Partners, Honolulu, HI	\$11,500,000	86	35. Hoyt Organization Inc., The, Torrance, CA	1,200,000	7
			36. Zapwater Communications, Los Angeles, CA	964,995	4
			37. Finn Partners, Denver, CO	800,000	8

Tax impacts PR firms should be aware of

Changes in the way that states impose tax on service providers pose serious concerns for how public relations, advertising and media firms may be exposed to new tax obligations in our ever-expanding service-based economy.

By Michael Belfer

The U.S. Supreme Court's 2018 tax decision in *South Dakota v. Wayfair, Inc.* greatly impacted the public relations, advertising, and media industries, as it required states to impose sales and use tax collection and remittance obligations on remote sellers, based solely on their economic activity in a state. The Court's decision in *Wayfair* affected both remote sellers of goods as well as businesses that provide services.

In general, states are constitutionally required to have a minimal connection to impose their taxes on an out-of-state taxpayer. Economic nexus laws establish this minimum link via a revenue threshold which, if exceeded, is deemed enough of a connection with a jurisdiction to create a tax obligation for the out-of-state taxpayer.

Currently, all 45 sales taxing states have mandated some level of a "factor presence" threshold for purposes of establishing sales tax nexus. Additionally, about a dozen of those states also utilize a receipts threshold test for corporate income taxes (e.g., New York), and/or other tax compliance, such as partnership filings and excise taxes (e.g., California and Washington). Accordingly, determining how receipts are sourced to a state becomes critical in light of the potential for increased income tax exposure under economic nexus. This is particularly important for service providers due to the shift in state sourcing rules from the cost-of-performance methodology to the increasingly popular market-based sourcing approach.

With service providers now required to consider the impact of economic nexus, public relations, advertising and media should consider the following:

State sourcing of service revenue

The two primary models that states use to source service revenue for income tax purposes are: one, cost of performance and two, market-based sourcing.

Under the cost-of-performance approach, service revenue is sourced to the location from which the services are rendered, or more specifically, the place where the costs to perform the services are incurred. When services are performed in multiple jurisdictions, some states require that either the majority or greatest proportion of the services need to be performed in the state, in order to source any revenue there—in

essence, an all-or-nothing test. Other states divide the revenue proportionally based on the percentage of service rendered in the state compared to the overall whole of the service rendering.

For market-based sourcing, revenues are sourced to the location of the customer, or more specifically, the location where the benefit of the service is received. State regulations contain various criteria for determining the jurisdiction where the benefit is received, such as the customer's billing address, the service delivery location, the order from location or even a reasonable approximation based on the particular circumstances at hand.



Market-based sourcing leading to economic nexus

As the vast majority of states now use market-based sourcing for corporate tax purposes, with many of them using this methodology for partnership filings as well, the interplay between the market-based sourcing concept and triggering economic nexus must be understood for the potentially significant impact on one's state taxes.

How may this affect public relations, advertising and media firms? To illustrate, take the following example: Corporation A renders \$750,000 of services from its office in New York to a client located in California, a market-based state. Assume California has also adopted a \$500,000 income tax economic nexus threshold. Since Corporation A's service receipts are sourced to California under market-based sourcing, it will have exceeded California's economic nexus threshold, thereby requiring Corporation A to file an income tax return in the state. Had California been a cost of performance jurisdiction, Corporation A would not have a

state filing requirement because no receipts would be sourced to California given that none of the services were rendered there. Thus, Corporation A wouldn't exceed California's economic nexus threshold.

Conclusion

Each year more and more states make the switch to market-based sourcing for service revenue to better reflect—and of course, tax—the ever-expanding service-based economy. By layering in an economic nexus threshold, states stand to cast a wider net, sweeping up new taxpayers. While the above example was simple, in practice, service providers, such as public relations, advertising and media firms, can be operating in dozens of states while rendering services for clients in many others. This sharply increases the complexity of applying these rules and the need to have an in-depth understanding of the revenue-sourcing methodologies and how they intersect with the economic nexus. It's important for public relations, advertising and media firms to consult with their trusted advisor as they consider the state sourcing for their service revenue and how the economic nexus will impact their firm's tax obligations.

For more information, contact Michael Belfer at Michael.Belfer@anchin.com.

Michael Belfer is Partner and Chair of Anchin's Public Relations, Advertising & Media Group. ○



Michael Belfer

PR brief

Joele Frank defends Blackbaud

Joele Frank is handling Blackbaud, the Charleston-based \$1.1 billion marketer of software designed to empower social impact, as it fends off an unsolicited takeover bid from Clearlake Capital Group.

The \$71 per share offer is a 25.9 percent premium over the 30-day average trading price of Blackbaud's stock for the period ended March 24.

Blackbaud's board has determined that the proposal is highly opportunistic and significantly undervalues the company.

Chairman Andrew Leitch called the bid an overt attempt to put Blackbaud in play. Non-profits and educational institutions use Blackbaud's software for fundraising, grantmaking and financial management.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher's Jamie Moser and Nick Lamplough represent Blackbaud.

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Surviving a social media crisis

The best way to survive a social media crisis is never to get into one in the first place.

By Thomas Mustac

Whenver something you post on social media harms your image or reputation, you've got a crisis on your hands. Sometimes, the trigger is an embarrassing photo you never thought would come to light or a post you thought was funny at the time. Anything you do on social media that compels others to question you—either who you are as an individual or your overall values—constitutes a social media crisis.

For companies, such a crisis can mean losing sales and customers, as the Bud Light controversy recently demonstrated. For individuals, it can mean losing friends or even getting “canceled.” Professional consequences may also follow. Two marketing professionals who managed the Bud Light campaign have been placed on leave, and Rolling Stone Magazine once ran an article about people who got fired due to their inappropriate social media content.

So, how can you survive a social media crisis? The best way is never to get into one in the first place.

Avoid social media crises if you can

According to an old Croatian saying, “If one watches out for oneself, then God will protect him as well.” The same goes for presenting yourself and your organization effectively on social media. If you're proactive and look out for your organization's best interests, then events will tend to favor you.

Toward that end, take a professional, neutral tone on social media. Double-check your posts' accuracy to avoid spreading misinformation, which can hurt your credibility and that of your organization. Scrutinize every post and ask yourself if it could offend anyone. If so, dial it back or take it out of the lineup completely to avoid pushing buttons.

Finally, clean up your old social media content. You might think the post you made on your personal account as a teenager isn't that serious, but it could come back to haunt you.

Be proactive: create a strategic plan

Social media crises happen quickly, so you need to be ready to respond quickly and effectively, so it's best to plan in advance for the possibility of one. To do this, consider your organization's strengths and weaknesses, because these factors can help or hinder your efforts during an actual crisis situation. By keeping these in mind, you can maximize your chances of creating a strategic plan that protects the reputation of your

brand while still allowing for transparency in times of crisis.

Next, conduct an inventory of your social media accounts to identify potential risks to the organization, brand, reputation, and team members. To the extent these risks can be reduced, take the necessary actions as soon as possible. For instance, delete posts or conduct staff training on best practices for social media.

After that, form a crisis communications team and assign responsibilities. Members of the team should understand their roles so that no time will be wasted in the event of an incident. In particular, someone should be designated as “the voice” who will speak on behalf of the company or organization. This person should be able to handle questions from both the public and the press while maintaining professionalism at all times.

That said, everyone in your organization should know what to say or do when confronted with negative comments, questions or requests for information, as well as who to contact if there's a crisis situation. Therefore, provide a detailed communications protocol that explains who is responsible for what, when, as well as the types of information that may or may not be released at different times.

In short, plan for the worst while aiming for the best. By creating a procedure for addressing problems, you and your organization will be able to react to any crisis. In the event that controversy becomes unavoidable, here are some tips for weathering it best.

Never lie

When you find yourself embroiled in a social media crisis, it might seem tempting to lie your way out of it, but if you try to cover something up, then you may get caught and look worse than ever. People hate liars, and it's hard to lie on social media when the content serves as a well-kept diary in chronological order.

Hopefully, you aren't guilty of doing something wrong. But if you are, then you will need to acknowledge it and act quickly to frame the discussion from your perspective. Otherwise, the public will begin to paint the story and your image in their minds without it. If you wait too long, people may no longer be willing to listen to your side at all, saying they've already heard enough from “the liar.”

If you acknowledge your fault, however, people will give you at least some credit. Everyone knows it's difficult to admit being

wrong and that it takes courage and character to do so. Owning your mistakes will help to redeem you in other people's eyes.

In these situations, the individual or voice of the organization should show remorse and apologize sincerely. You can pay the best PR practitioners in the world to represent you, but if you're cocky or arrogant and present yourself as someone above society, then you're asking for the worst outcomes.

Defend yourself

Sometimes, however, people may blame you for something you didn't do. For instance, someone might have made a fake profile or circulated a fake post or image. Now that Twitter requires payment for verification, this type of impersonation has become more likely. In addition, this problem grows more prevalent and challenging as AI and deepfake technology gain sophistication.



Thomas Mustac

In these cases, it's important to defend yourself, but before you do, I recommend taking a social media vacation—go “Zen Mode,” as I like to call it. When you've been wrongfully represented, it's natural to feel angry, but speaking or posting on social media in anger can make the situation worse as you may say something you later come to regret. Take the time you need to reconsider your or your organization's recent actions and decide on a proper course of action. It's okay to stay quiet as you plan how to demonstrate innocence and gather evidence.

Aim to deploy a positive campaign that helps counter the negative coverage and amplify all the good you do in your community. Release that information to the public as soon as possible. When you do, make sure the voice of your organization is prepared to demonstrate transparency and answer questions—even the hard ones from hostile sources.

The best paths

While developing a strategic plan and vetting your communications carefully can help avoid social media crises, you or your organization may confront one at some point. If you've been the target of impersonation, then pause and take a strategic period to defend yourself as effectively as possible.

If you face a reckoning over a painful mistake, act quickly. Remember that honesty and acknowledgment of any wrongdoing offer your best path forward.

Thomas Mustac is OtterPR's medical and health industry PR specialist. ○

Levick founder Richard Levick dies at 65

Levick CEO Richard S. Levick passed away April 11, due to cancer, his firm today announced. He was 65.

He founded the firm in 1998, and it was a shaping force on the practice of crisis and litigation communications and reputation management. The firm has handled the media on such matters as the 2000 Florida election recount, the Catholic Church during its sex-abuse scandals, and prisoner detentions at Guantanamo.

In a statement, the firm's leadership team noted that Levick's impact on the world of communications will be felt for years to come:

"We have lost a great man, an inspiring mentor, a pioneering leader, and a true friend to many of us in this business. We will miss Richard deeply, but his legacy will live on through the work that we do every day, the people who were made better for having known him, and the countless reputations that were saved because of him."

The firm plans to host a celebration of his life with details to be announced. ○



Richard S. Levick

Tech guru Benecke takes McKinsey post

Rowan Benecke, who has more than 25 years of PR firm experience, has joined McKinsey & Co as Director of Communications for North America.

He heads a 25-member team focused on the management consultancy's mission to accelerate sustainable growth and partner with clients to meet their challenges and opportunities.

Benecke also will work to protect McKinsey's reputation by creating greater trust among colleagues, clients and leaders in the world of government, academia, non-profits and think tanks.

He will develop thought leadership contents and experts and forge new relationships with strategic influencers.

Benecke, who co-founded Zeno Group, also served as President of Cognito U.S.,



Rowan Benecke

Chief Growth officer at Ruder Finn, Global Tech Chair at Burson-Marsteller and Executive VP at Text 100.

Since September, he has been working as an independent consulting in the metro New York area. ○

SeaWorld names Thalberg CM&CO

SeaWorld Entertainment brings on Marisa Thalberg as Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, effective April 24. Thalberg has served as Executive VP, Chief Brand and Marketing Officer at Lowe's and Global Chief Brand Officer at Taco Bell.

She was most recently a strategic advisor at venture capital and private equity firm Composite Ventures.

In her new role, she will be responsible for brand and marketing strategies focused on driving revenue, increasing visitation across the organization's portfolio of 12 parks, and elevating the company's conservation mission. ○



Marisa Thalberg

BCW Recruits Golin's Coldagelli

BCW has named Matt Coldagelli EVP and leader of its corporate affairs practice in Chicago.

Joining the WPP unit from Interpublic's Golin brand, he will be responsible for building business in the Midwest and managing the office's corporate reputation, ESG, crisis and issues management, and media relations teams.

As Golin's Executive Director, Corporate Communications, Coldagelli led efforts in corporate reputation, narrative development, B2B PR, media relations, executive visibility and thought leadership for clients across the manufacturing, tech, agribusiness, professional services and consumer goods sectors.

He also spent 14 years at Edelman and did a stint at MSL.

Coldagelli reports to Maxine Winer, EVP and Chicago market leader, who joined BCW in ○



Matt Coldagelli

Snap's Mitchell shifts to Levi Strauss

Snap Chief Marketing Officer Kenny Mitchell is heading to Levi Strauss & Co., where he will be Senior VP and CMO, effective June 5.

At Snap, the parent company of Snapchat, Mitchell led the growth of the platform's global community, advertising base and developer partners. Before coming to Snap, he was Vice President of brand content and engagement at McDonald's USA, and served as head of consumer engagement at Gatorade, a part of PepsiCo. ○



Kenny Mitchell

WSJ's Hall jumps to Brunswick Group

Wall Street Journal veteran Glenn Hall will join Brunswick Group on April 24 as Partner and Executive Editor. Based in New York, Hall will be responsible for global thought leadership.

At the WSJ, Hall was head of professional news and was responsible for Dow Jones Newswires, WSJ Pro and c-suite services. Earlier, he was Editor-in-Chief of TheStreet, MarketWatch and worked at various editorial posts at Bloomberg during a ten-year run. ○



Glenn Hall

Blumhouse hires Gizoni as comms. VP

Blumhouse, a film and TV production company, brings on Christina Gizoni as VP, Marketing and Communications.

Gizoni joins the company from the film publicity department at Netflix, where she worked on campaigns for such films as "Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery," "Blonde" and "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs." Previously, she served as Coordinator of National Film Publicity for Sony Pictures Entertainment. ○



Christina Gizoni



APCO North America President Kelly Williamson (left) and members of the of leadership team.

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360PR+ is a certified women-owned business and partner in PROI Worldwide, with reach and expert resources in 100+ cities globally. The 360PR+ family of agencies includes 360PR+, CRC, Powers Brand Communications and Three Cheers PR. For more, visit www.360PR.plus.

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Matt Caiola and Dara Busch,
Co-CEOs

5WPR is a full-service PR agency in NYC known for cutting-edge programs that engage with businesses, issues and ideas. With more than 300 professionals serving clients in B2C (Beauty & Fashion, Consumer Brands, Entertainment, Food & Beverage, Health & Wellness, Travel & Hospitality, Technology, Nonprofit), B2B (Corporate Communications and Reputation Management), Public Affairs, Crisis Communications and Digital Marketing (Social Media, Influencer, Paid Media, SEO). Founded by Ronn Torossian 20 years ago, 5W was named to *Inc. Magazine's* Best Workplaces 2022 list, awarded 2020 PR Agency of The Year, and brings leading businesses a resourceful, bold, and results-driven approach to communication.

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Bill Haynes, Founder & CEO

BackBay Communications is an integrated public relations, content development and digital marketing firm focused on the financial services sector. BackBay specializes in private equity and venture capital, asset management, fintech, and impact investing/ESG. With offices in Boston and London, BackBay serves companies in North America, Europe, and elsewhere, leveraging global partners.

BackBay takes a brand-centric, content-driven approach to developing and executing integrated communications programs for financial services firms including marketing strategy, content development, media relations, brand research and message development, creative design, and multi-channel distribution of company news and perspectives to build brand awareness, credibility and drive new business for our clients.

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BackBay was recently ranked #1 in Boston for financial services PR by *O'Dwyer's*. BackBay also consistently ranks as a top 10 global PR Agency in *The Deal's* private equity league tables.

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— Continued from page 63

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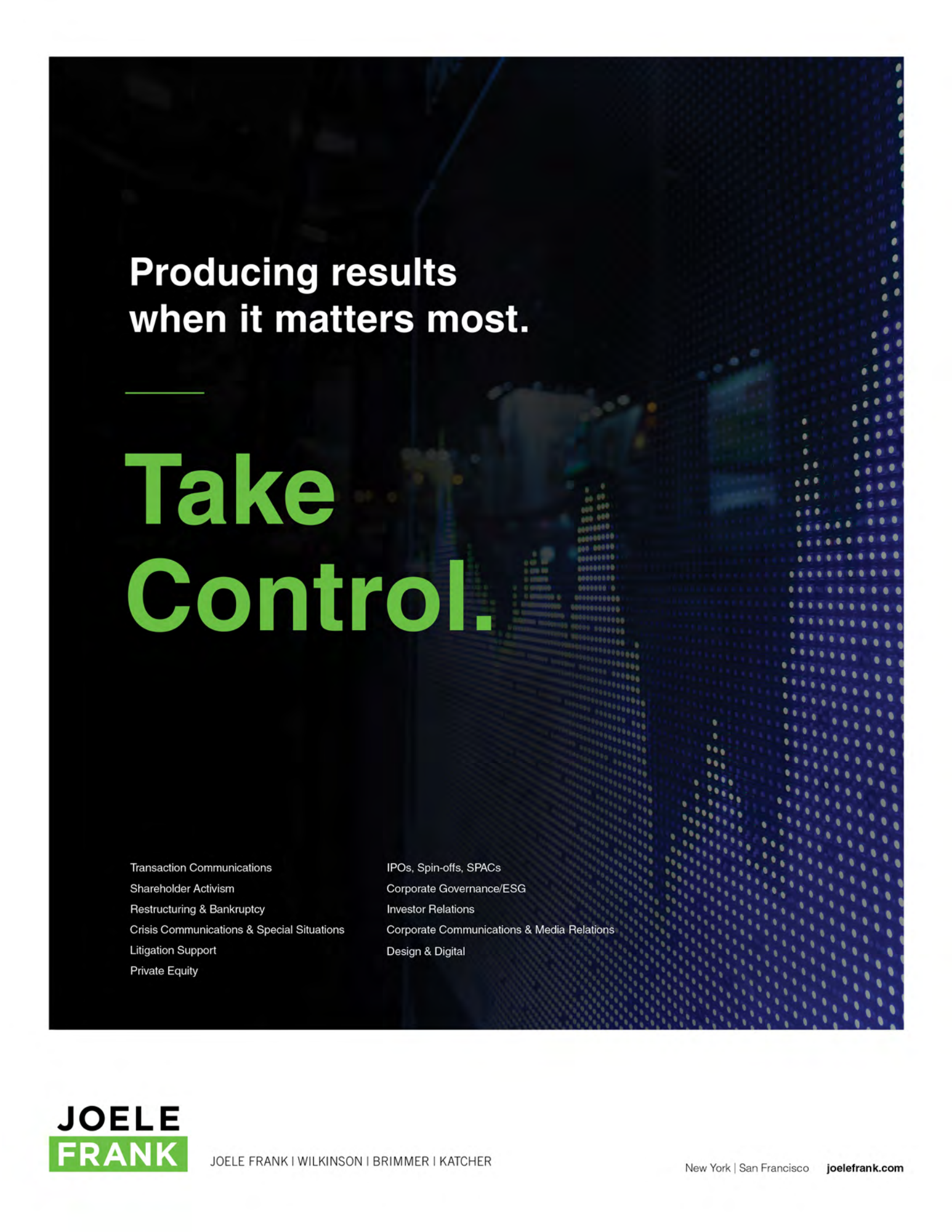
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COYNE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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ing Every Conversation Count”; we believe that communication is about creating a two-way dialogue that is authentic and relevant to people’s lives. Our culture is centered on our three values of ‘Champion Equity,’ ‘Set the Standard’ and ‘Do What’s Right’ where all identities are celebrated and all voices are heard.

We are best known for our award-winning work in the consumer sector with some of the world’s best known brands, particularly in the packaged goods, food & beverage, automotive, gaming, tech and travel sectors.

With offices in Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Quebec City, Los Angeles, New York, Orange County, and London, we work closely with key clients such as Champion, P&G, Duracell, and Nissin to help them build meaningful connections with consumers.

COYNE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Rich Lukis and John Gogarty, Presidents
Cathy Clarkin, Chief Financial Officer
Clara Heffernan, Chief People Officer
Kelly Dencker, Jennifer Kamienski, Tim Schramm and Lisa Wollon, Executive Vice Presidents

We are makers and strategists obsessed with creativity, leading with imagination and enthusiasm, and refining with the discipline of predictive outcomes. Founded in 1991, Coyne PR is one of the top independent public relations firms in the United States with developers, producers, writers, designers, animators, social specialists and communication experts providing full-service client support.

Recognized throughout the industry as “The Best Place to Work,” more than 200 culturally diverse minds now call Coyne PR—HOME. We have wildly creative offices in New York and New Jersey as well as colleagues



Coyne PR kicked off its hybrid work approach, “Better 2Gether,” which maximizes concentrated in-person collaboration and a flexible work approach, enabling collaborative brainstorming across teams for clients, the opportunity for casual collisions in the workplace, and the best possible service for our clients.

in 115 cities, 49 countries and six continents through our partnership in The Worldcom Public Relations Group. We have made it our mission to create a work environment that attracts the best people by giving them the freedom to do their best work. As a result, we enjoy the highest employee retention rate in the industry!

Our clients include many of the world’s most respected companies ... and those that want to be. We help these clients develop integrated strategies across all paid, earned, shared and owned platforms with the help of our full-service digital production studio.

Our reputation is built upon three decades of creativity, strategy and service. It is confirmed by more than 1,000 industry awards including Midsize Agency of the Year, Consumer Agency of the Year, Creative Agency of the Year, North American Creative Agency of the Year, and of course ... Best Agency to Work For. Together with our clients, we have developed some of the world’s best-known platforms, programs and campaigns that have driven excitement and business results while simultaneously rallying employee engagement.

We are bold, independent, nimble and purpose driven.

We are one.

Clients include: American Petroleum Institute, American Urological Association, Arla Foods, Bausch Health, Bayer, Beam Suntory, Bimbo Bakeries, BMW of North America, Casio America, Cayman Islands Dept of Tourism, Cumberland Packing Corp, Del Monte Foods, Eggland’s Best, Ex-

press Scripts, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Gap, Haleon, HelloFresh, Hilton, Holcim Solutions and Products US, Horizon Group USA, HRA Pharma America, Humana, International Code Council, Just Born Quality Confections, Kobrand, L’Oreal, MDLive, Midea America, miraDry, Mohegan Tribal Gaming Authority, Nattera, Newman’s Own, Ollie’s Bargain Outlet, Orangetheory Fitness, Otsuka, Outrigger Enterprises Group, Owens Corning, Pacira BioSciences, Perrigo, PharmaRegs, PLx Pharma, Precision Medicine Group, Prestige Brands, REEF, Reproductive Medicine Associates NJ, Shell Oil Company, Signify, Spin Master, Stellantis, Stryker Orthopaedics, The ASPCA, The Center for Breakthrough Medicines, Truckstop, TruRoots, University of Virginia, VTech and Yahoo!

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Suresh John, EVP, Digital Strategy & Analytics

The Crosby team is passionate about helping clients Inspire Actions That Matter™—actions that

positively impact people’s lives and contribute to the greater good.

Crosby helps clients make powerful connections with their customers, constituents, and communities to shape attitudes, inspire behavior change, and motivate action. The firm’s award-winning campaigns, which integrate paid, earned, shared and owned media, have touched the lives of virtually every American.

The firm has specialized practices in Healthcare, Government, Non-profits and Causes, and Military and Veterans. Clients include the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DAV (Disabled American Veterans), Dept. of Defense/Military OneSource, ENERGY STAR, Kaiser Permanente, OrganDonor.gov, Partnership to Fight Cybercrime, Peace Corps, Refuah Health, Shriners Hospitals for Children, Social Security Administration, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, United Urology, Veterans Healthcare Administration, and The Wallace Foundation.

Crosby is a Google Premier Partner, #22 on O’Dwyer’s ranking of PR firms and #10 for healthcare PR, and a member of the PR Council and American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As). The firm has offices in Maryland’s capital of Annapolis and in Washington, D.C. To see case studies and capabilities, visit crosbymarketing.com.

EDELMAN

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Edelman is a global communications firm that partners with businesses and organizations to evolve, promote and protect their brands and reputations. Our 6,000 people in more than 60 offices deliver communications strategies that give our clients the confidence to lead and act with certainty, earning the trust of their stakeholders. Our honors include the Cannes Lions Grand Prix for PR; *Advertising Age's* 2019 A-List; the *Holmes Report's* 2018 Global Digital Agency of the Year; and, five times, Glassdoor's Best Places to Work. Since our founding in 1952, we have remained an independent, family-run business. Edelman owns specialty companies Edelman Intelligence (research) and United Entertainment Group (entertainment, sports, lifestyle).

THE EHRHARDT GROUP

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Katie Mitchell, Director of Public Affairs

Being local and knowing local is more important than ever. The way to win in the U.S. Gulf South is to have a firm that deeply understands talking to the people of the Gulf South.

For more than 25 years, The Ehrhardt Group has moved people to act by crafting messages that compel, inspire and educate. Our work touches the people and communities most important to our clients, colleagues and fellow citizens across Louisiana, Mississippi, coastal Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. We believe in action and acting wisely. Rarely do time and fresh air solve problems. Understanding the challenges and understanding how to engage with the people of the Gulf South at the right time and with the right message do. Since 1996, we have successfully advised *Fortune* 500 corporations, local and regional institutions and public entities in the critical areas of issues management, media relations, reputation management, crisis communications, social media and public affairs.

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Will Reese, Chief Innovation Officer
Karsten Risch, MD, PhD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer
Jamie Avallone, Chief Data Officer
James Tsuyuki, Chief Technology Officer
Jen O'Dwyer, President, North America
Rachel McCready, Chief Creative Officer, North America
Alexis Penty, Chief Strategy Officer, North America

Evoke (www.evokegroup.com) is a leading marketing, media, and communications agency bound by a common purpose: Health more humanTM. With offices in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Los Angeles, London, Dublin, Princeton, and Chicago, and more than 850 employees, Evoke proudly works with 18 of the top 20 pharmaceutical companies worldwide.

Evoke is a Crain's Best Places to Work and includes the specialty agency brands Evoke KYNE, focusing on communications and PR, and Evoke Navience, focusing on market access and payer marketing.

Evoke is part of Huntsworth plc (www.huntsworth.com), an international healthcare and communications group. Huntsworth's principal areas of focus are marketing, medical, and immersive com-

munication services for healthcare clients, which are primarily large and mid-sized pharmaceutical and biotech companies. Clayton, Dubilier & Rice acquired Huntsworth plc on May 1, 2020.

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Neil Mortine, Chairman & CEO
Marty McDonald, President
Aaron Brown, Executive Vice President

Fahlgren Mortine is an integrated communications company helping brands engage in ways that are precise and meaningful. Locations include Columbus (headquarters), Cleveland and Dayton, Ohio; Boise, Idaho; Denver, Colo. and New York City.

The agency is a member of the global IPREX network.

Industry expertise includes B2B, building products, CPG, economic development, energy, healthcare, higher education, manufacturing, logistics, retail, technology, and travel and tourism.

Fahlgren Mortine helps brands get to precisely what matters using a powerful combination of data, design and creativity. Doing work that dares to make a difference and remaining accountable for getting measurable results is one of the many reasons clients choose to stay with the company at a tenure 182% longer than industry average.

Fahlgren Mortine regularly earns Best Place to Work and Agency of the Year honors from various trade organizations, as well as industry-specific recognition for campaign excellence.

TURNER, a travel, tourism and active lifestyle public relations agency, is a Fahlgren Mortine company.

Clients include: Avery Dennison, Avuity, Balloon Time, Bath & Body Works, Bernzomatic, Bob Evans Restaurants, Boise CVB, Bradenton Area CVB, Bright Pet Nutrition Group, Capital University, Cardinal Health, CIRCOR, Columbia Gas, Columbus Partnership, Condado Tacos, Crown Equipment Corp., Dayton Chil-

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Crosby's leadership team includes (L to R): Anna Zawislanski, EVP, Government Practice Leader; Pam Atkinson, EVP, Director of Connection Planning; David Butler, EVP, Multimedia Production; Denise Aube, EVP, Healthcare Practice Leader; Raymond Crosby, President & CEO; Amy Hitt, EVP, Director of Operations; Suresh John, EVP, Digital Strategy & Analytics; and Rob Schnapp, Executive Creative Director.

FEINTUCH COMMS.

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dren's Hospital, Destination Panama City, DHL Supply Chain, Discover Dominica Authority, Donate Life Ohio, Dunkin', Emerson, Experience Columbus, Fresenius Kabi, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., Greenbrier County CVB, JobsOhio, The J.M. Smucker Co., The J.R. Simplot Co., Kent State University, The Kroger Co., Leatherman Tool Group, Lubrizol Advanced Materials, Midmark Corp., Monterey County CVB, Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce/CVB, National Veterans Memorial and Museum, Niagara USA, North Dakota Tourism, Ohio Lottery Commission, Ohio Manufacturers' Assn., Parker Hannifin, Parkinson's Foundation, Plaskolite, Savannah College of Art and Design, Smart Columbus, Sonoma County Tourism, Swisslog, T. Marzetti Co., Travel Nevada, University at Buffalo, Value City Furniture / American Signature Inc., Vertiv, Worthington Industries, and Wright-Patt Credit Union

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Henry Feintuch, President
Doug Wright, Vice President

Feintuch Communications, headquartered in New York, is an award-winning, boutique b-to-b tech PR firm focused on business results. We partner with our public and privately held clients to help implement a world class PR infrastructure and then work with them to achieve their primary business objectives—building their brand, increasing their thought leadership, generating leads or helping position themselves for a capital event (fundraising round, M&A, IPO, etc.).

This is especially critical for small and microcap public companies who may need help in crafting compelling messages and which are seeking coverage through a range of channels from traditional and social media to other digital platforms. This "PR first" approach can help these smaller public companies to establish a stronger brand identity and reputation which is critical for attracting



Celebrating their 2021 PRSA Silver Anvil Win are Deirdre McFarland, SVP Marketing, NCSolutions together with Henry Feintuch and Doug Wright of Feintuch Communications.

new investors and customers.

Though we're experienced in most corporate and b-to-b markets, we are particularly strong in a few major verticals including ad and marketing tech, energy and clean tech, financial services and fintech, security and e-commerce, manufacturing tech, telecom/wireless/IoT and SaaS, audio-visual, retail tech, real estate and proptech and consumer electronics. We also have extra affinity for helping start-ups with their critical marketing needs; and international companies seeking to enter the U.S. market.

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Gil Bashe, Managing Partner, Chair Global Health & Purpose
Marty Ettlemeyer, CFO

When Peter Finn founded FINN Partners a decade ago, his vision was to build a world-class, best-place-to-work agency with a heart and conscience, that any major

client around the world would be proud to have as a partner. 10 years later, in the wake of a global pandemic, racial strife and business tumult, Peter's original vision has not only been realized; it has accelerated. Thanks to the agency's values-driven culture, category-leading expertise, and independent model, FINN has achieved record growth and global powerhouse status—with revenues up 49% and fees hitting \$162.2M in 2021, and expectations to exceed \$200MM in fees this year.

FINN's values-centric culture has been rocket fuel for the agency's growth: serving as a magnet for clients in need of trusted counsel, employees in search of upward career mobility and meaning, and a haven for entrepreneurs eager to tap into the agency's financial stability and global scale.

High growth practice areas included technology, health, consumer, travel, purpose/CSR, financial services, and integrated marketing, and the firm expanded significantly in key regions such as the Southeast, Midwest, West and Hawaii.

With more than 1,200 professionals in the Americas, Europe and Asia, the agency acts as ONE FINN, united by a shared vision, unwavering values, and a relentless commitment to driving positive change.

FOREFRONT COMMUNICATIONS

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Eric Soderberg, Managing Partner
Jed Hamilton, Head of Client Service
Michael Kingsley, Head of Media Relations
Amanda Perrucci, Head of Digital
Sam Belden, Head of Content

Forefront Communications is a specialized marketing and communications firm focused on the institutional fintech sector. We provide media relations, content, digital marketing, branding and messaging services that propel our clients to the forefront.

Clients include: Broadridge, Hidden Road Partners, OpenFin, Talos, Toronto Stock Exchange and Two Sigma

FRANCO

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Dan Ponder, Chairman
Tina Kozak, CEO
Tina Sullivan, President & COO
Nikki Litte, Senior Vice President

As an integrated communications agency, Franco's programs are comprised of a variety of paid, earned, shared and owned services. Our capabilities include media and influencer relations, community relations, brand development, crisis and reputation management, marketing, digital marketing, event management, creative and video development, social media and digital and traditional advertising. Our team thrives on the principles of traditional public relations while embracing the combination of data-driven, people-powered integrated communications. We skillfully combine analytics and insights with relationships and instinct to build multi-faceted B2B and B2C integrated communications programs that define leaders, innovators and influencers in Detroit and around the world. No matter the size of our clients' communications and marketing programs, we make recommendations on how to leverage opportunities across paid, earned, shared and owned platforms for an integrated program that aligns with each organization's unique goals.



Franco, a Detroit-based integrated communications agency, was founded in 1964 and has evolved to remain at the forefront of a changing industry. Franco builds strategic integrated communications programs for B2B and B2C clients in a variety of industries with a local, national and global reach.

FRENCH | WEST | VAUGHAN

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Rick French, Chairman & CEO
David Gwyn, President
Natalie Best, Chief Operating Officer

French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast's leading public relations, public affairs, advertising and digital media agency, a distinction it has held since 2001. Headquartered in Raleigh, N.C., and founded in April 1997, FWV has received 25 National Agency of the Year honors over the past quarter century.

FWV is the parent company of fashion and lifestyle PR firm AMP3 (New York City); mobility and transportation-focused agency The Millerschin Group (Greater Detroit); pet and animal health practice FWV Fetching; outdoor, ski, fashion, technology and consumer brand marketing agency CGPR (Greater Boston) and feature film development imprint Prix Productions. FWV employs more than 130 public relations, public

affairs, social media, advertising and digital marketing experts between its Raleigh, N.C., headquarters and offices around the country.

In addition to its National Agency of the Year honors, FWV has

amassed more than 1,500 PR, advertising and digital marketing awards on behalf of its blue-chip client roster, making it the most-decorated agency in the history of the Southeastern U.S.

G&S BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

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Steve Halsey, Chief Growth Officer
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Luke Lambert, President and CEO

We are more than a public relations firm, digital agency or creative shop. We are a fully integrated team of media strategists, storytellers, engagement experts and analysts who are true partners in moving your business forward.

At G&S, we live and breathe our mission to inspire people to take action, resulting in business growth for our clients. That's why we choose to work with companies who are making a difference, every single day. We immerse ourselves in a handful of industry sectors to help clients better navigate the realities brands face today. This includes work in: advanced manufacturing and energy; agribusiness; financial and professional services;

healthcare; and, home and building.

Contact us at www.gscommunications.com to learn how we help innovative companies change the world.

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Kymra Knuth, EVP, North America
Steve Jursa, EVP, North America
Gerard LaFond, Chief Digital Officer
Mark Pinsent, Managing Director, Europe
Lydia Lau, CFO / EVP of Global Operations

Defining communications broadly to include thought leadership, digital marketing, and paid content as well as traditional PR, The Hoffman Agency knows how to differentiate brands and drive sales. With a heritage in the technology sector, the firm's work today cuts across a range of industries.

While campaigns vary by client and industry, all share one theme: the creation of content that reflects the tenets of storytelling. This

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The Hoffman Agency's global leadership team descended on Silicon Valley with the objective of accentuating their superpower, collaboration.

THE HOFFMAN AGENCY

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means developing narratives that prompt journalists to write and target audiences to read—a far cry from the “corporate speak” that satisfies internal stakeholders. The firm applies this same mentality to its talent acquisition and marketing services.

For clients with global needs, the company operates in Asia Pacific, Europe and the United States. Unlike traditional agencies handicapped by their silo structure, The Hoffman Agency embraces a collaborative approach to implementing multi-country campaigns (don’t worship individual office P/L). This leverage of content and thinking across geographies ultimately generates better results.

Sample Clients: Alation, Alteryx, ASML, Axis Communications, Baidu, City of Fremont, Graphcore, Lam Research, Lightship RV, Moloco, NextFlex, Nokia, Nutanix, Oracle, Rambus, Skyworks, Synopsys, Trellex, SuperMicro, Tealium, TSMC, Twitter, Twitch, Visa, XCharge Energy and Zoom.

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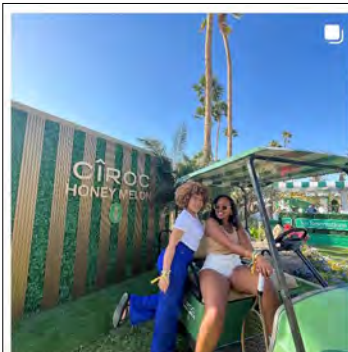
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Laura Macdonald, Chief Growth Officer

Stephanie Pastorelli, Global Head of People & Culture
Ute Hildebrandt, Managing Director, Continental Europe

Hotwire is a global tech communications consultancy that helps businesses better engage and connect with their customers. From Sydney to San Francisco, we operate with a borderless mind-set across 15 locations including the UK, US, France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Australia, together with a partner network spanning 29 cities around the world.

HUNTER

One World Trade Center
Floor 68



We are never complacent and in constant pursuit of opportunities that take us out of our comfort zone. We stay on the hunt for new ways to WOW our clients, grow as individuals, and evolve the agency.

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HUNTER is an award-winning consumer marketing communications firm ranked as a “Best Place to Work” and “Consumer Agency of the Year” with offices in New York, Los Angeles and London and partnerships that extend our reach globally. Beginning with research-driven insights, HUNTER executes strategic, integrated programs that build brand equity, increase engagement, and drive measurable business results. Our 250 person firm employs a powerful blend of marketing solutions including strategic planning, earned media relations, social and digital media, talent and influencer engagement, experiential marketing, multicultural outreach, and content creation and distribution across all platforms and channels to earn attention. We create,

place, share and amplify brand narratives for some of the world’s best known and most beloved companies.

Founded in 1989 with a specialization in food and nutrition, HUNTER has expanded organically into adjacent categories and as our clients moved on to new sectors and took us with them. Leading practice areas now include Food, Wine and Spirits, Retail, E-Commerce, Tech, Fashion, Health + Wellness, Beauty + Personal Care, Home + Lifestyle and Travel. Our motto is “we earn it,” and at HUNTER we focus on doing so in three key areas: earning consumer attention, earning client relationships, and earning staff dedication. Our creative approach, client service-orientation and values-driven culture has led to one of the longest average staff tenures in the business and some of the most enduring client relationships including TABASCO® Pepper Sauce, our first client 34 years ago and still a client today.

ICR

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Established in 1998, ICR partners with companies to execute strategic communications and advisory programs that achieve business goals, build awareness and credibility, and enhance long-term enterprise value. The firm’s highly-differentiated service model, which pairs capital markets veterans with senior communications professionals, brings deep sector knowledge and relationships to approximately 1000 clients across more than 20 industry groups. ICR’s healthcare practice operates under the Westwicke brand. Today, ICR is one of the largest and most experienced independent communications and advisory firms in North America, maintaining offices in New York,

Norwalk, Boston, Baltimore and Beijing. ICR also advises on capital markets transactions through ICR Capital, LLC.

Clients include: Abbott Laboratories, Asana, Beyond Meat, BigCommerce Holdings, Boot Barn, Capri Holdings, Chunghwa Telecom Co. Ltd., Colgate-Palmolive, Darden Restaurants, Dynatrace, Energy Vault, Enfusion, Freshpet, Harman, Intel/Mobileye, Jack-in-the-Box, Jamieson Laboratories Ltd., Killer Burger, Kymera Therapeutics, Leslie's Poolmart, lululemon athletica, MongoDB, Inc., New York City REIT, Paramount Group, Inc., Planet Fitness, Regis Corp, Roots, SAB Biotherapeutics, Shake Shack, Sonos, Inc., Sprinklr, Starwood Property Trust, TAG Holdings, Tencent Music Entertainment Group, Waitr, Warby Parker, Workiva, Zoom and ZoomInfo

IMRE

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Anna Kotis, President
Brian Simmons, Chief Growth Officer
Patrick Sullivan, Chief Creative Officer
Anne Denford, Chief People Officer

Imre works with many of the world's leading and high growth brands. Driven by innovation, the agency's integrated suite of marketing communications services include brand strategy, creative, digital, social, omnichannel marketing, modern earned, production, and media, data & analytics.

In 2023, the firm will continue to focus on disrupting the conventions of life sciences marketing, fueled by the fresh perspective shared by its culturally-connected creators across the agency's consumer marketing team. This intentional approach continues to lead to more fully-integrated AOR assignments, and transforming the agency into a talent magnet.

Imre partners with a diversified and growing portfolio of brands across pharmaceutical, biotech, automotive, sports and retail, among other categories. The agency maintains offices in New York, Baltimore and Philadelphia in addition

to a growing group of employees who work from anywhere. Imre is an LGBTQ-founded company.

INFINITE GLOBAL

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Additional offices: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and London

Jamie Diaferia, Founder & CEO
Zach Olsen, President
Isabel Podda, COO

Infinite Global is an award-winning strategic communications agency advising a wide range of domestic and international clients facing difficult scenarios in which reputational, legal and commercial risk is high.

We advise organizations and individuals, providing counsel and tactical support to mitigate risk and protect reputations when it matters most. We have broad sector experience managing our clients' reputational risk, often involving active litigation, regulatory and political pressure, media attention and heightened public scrutiny. Infinite has an established data breach response practice that helps clients across a range of industries—in-

cluding financial and legal services, education and healthcare—mitigate, prepare for and respond to the risks endemic to housing sensitive data.

Our work spans each phase of the crisis lifecycle: from pre-crisis preparation and planning, to rapid crisis response and post-crisis reputational repair.

INSPIRE PR GROUP

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Hinda Mitchell, President
Hana Bieliauskas, Vice President
Diane Hurd, Vice President

Inspire PR Group is nationally recognized as a trusted communications partner to valued brands. As a full-service national firm integrating public relations, marketing and digital expertise, we help our clients see and navigate the bigger picture, not just the tactical win.

Our success is based on earning client trust, asking tough questions, creating tailored solutions and telling engaging stories. This is how we produce inspiring results.

At Inspire, we strongly believe that relationships feed results. Committed relationships lead to candid dialogue and help inform the best strategies. When we are a trusted partner in the process, more than just implementers of

prescribed ideals, we find that we can collectively heighten expectations—and then exceed them.

Many of Inspire's clients have maintained their relationship with us for more than five, 10 and even 20 years.

We're drawn to companies, organizations and brands with well-defined values, a clear sense of purpose and commitments to social, environmental and community impact.

Inspire has deep knowledge of industry issues in the following areas, which allows us to move quickly on urgent issues while also navigating the nuances specific to the industry: Food & Agriculture, Corporate, Education (K-12 and Higher Ed), Trade & Member Associations, Sustainability & Energy, Nonprofit, Restaurants, Tourism & Hospitality, Development & Construction and Pet Care.

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Landis Communications is a two-time Gold Quill IABC Award winner, a PRSA Silver Anvil national award winner and has been named a top U.S. Social Media, Reputation Management and Media Relations Agency by TopPRAgencies.com.

The July issue of *O'Dwyer's* will profile Travel & Tourism PR firms. If you would like to be profiled, contact Editor Steve Barnes at 646/843-2089 or steve@odwyerpr.com

JPA HEALTH

— Continued from page 71

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 & Insights
Adam Pawluk, CCO

JPA Health is a full-service, integrated marketing communications agency that is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with offices in New York, Boston and London. We work exclusively in the health sector with a team that is laser focused on helping people live healthier lives. Our passion can be summed up in one word: Connect'ability, a term that JPA coined to reflect how we "bring it together" for our clients. Over the course of 2022, JPA Health continued its growth trajectory from years past, achieving 39% revenue growth, 33% client growth and 13% staff growth, compared to the previous year.

Clients include: American Association of Clinical Endocrinology, American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, American Kidney Fund, Applied Therapeutics, Arvinas, AstraZeneca, Ascendis, BlueWind Medical, Community Catalyst, Geisinger Medical Center, Glaukos, GSK, IDEXX, Ig-Genix, Intuitive, Kroger Health, Ladiant Biosciences, Lilly, LUNgevity, Medicines360, Merck, Milestone, National Institute of Health (NIH), Nobelpharma, Rhythm Pharmaceuticals, Sage Therapeutics, Sanofi, Takeda, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), The Physicians Foundation, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and Vibrant Gastro

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Sean Dowdall, President
Brianne Miller, Business
 Development Manager

Named America's #1 PR Agency (Small Firm) (*Ragan's*), the #1 Healthcare PR Agency in America (*Ragan's*) and the firm PRSA San

Francisco named "Agency of the Year," San Francisco-based Landis Communications Inc. (LANDIS) is celebrating 33 years in business. LANDIS also is a two-time Gold Quill IABC Award winner, a PRSA Silver Anvil national award winner and has been named a top U.S. Social Media, Reputation Management and Media Relations Agency by TopPRAgencies.com.

LANDIS is an integrated public relations, digital/social media and marketing communications agency with clients in health care, technology, sustainability / environmental science and consumer goods and services. LANDIS' services include: public relations, marketing, content marketing, social media, digital marketing, advertising, email marketing, video production, crisis communications, media and presentation training and more. Clients include AEye, Amgen, Centre for Neuro Skills, Lucile Packard Children's Foundation for Children's Health, UCSF, Global Alzheimer's Platform Foundation, Save the Redwoods League, Peninsula Open Space Trust, Sonoma Land Trust, Together Bay Area, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Graton Casino Resort, Align Surgical Associates and more.

LANDIS is a certified member of the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, is an official Corporate Diversity Supplier and is certified as a Small Business Enterprise by the City of San Francisco. LANDIS is the San Francisco member agency of the Public Relations Global Network, with 50+ affiliate agencies worldwide.

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Mike Schroeder, SVP, New Clients

LaunchSquad is an award-winning public relations and creative communications agency. Founded

in 2000, we are a diverse team of storytellers, writers, artists, strategists, and analysts. We partner with companies to create handcrafted programs tailored to their needs and designed for lasting impact. We are proud to promote companies who are shaking up or establishing brand new industries, from healthcare and energy to AI, retail, cybersecurity, biotech and life sciences.

Storytelling is at the center of the work we do. Our team partners with clients to elevate their stories and spread them in ways that demand attention, build lasting engagement, solve perception challenges and create dynamic market leaders.

Our capabilities include expert media relations and traditional PR programs, content strategy and development, video and design concepts and production, social media, live or virtual experiences, crisis communications and influencer/paid media programs. We are committed to constantly measuring, analyzing and optimizing our campaigns, switching gears on a dime and ensuring every campaign is delivering the highest possible impact and results.

Clients include: Anyscale, Arcadia, Bicycle Health, Climeworks, Cohere, Divert, Equip, General Catalyst, Goodwill, ICF, iHeartMedia, Uber, Netflix, On Running and more.

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Founded in 2001, LaVoieHealth-Science advances health and science innovations through our partnerships with global medical and health companies and brands to build recognition and value, attract capital, and reach business partners, medical audiences, customers, and talent through integrated communications and marketing. We transform health and science innovations through public relations, investor relations and corporate communications, as well as marketing, and digital services. We

are recognized as a strategic communications agency for moving the needle, bringing solid, creative solutions, and decades of specialized experience to our clients. We are ranked among the Top 30 independent healthcare communications agencies in the United States according to *O'Dwyer's* 2023 public relations firm rankings. We are an award-winning agency having won over 60 public relations and investor relations awards and are a member of the *Inc.* 5000's fastest-growing private companies Hall of Fame. We are certified in healthcare communications compliance and serve commercial and pre-commercial clients both domestically and globally. Through our alliance with Omnicom Public Relations Group, we bring our global clients a broader set of health and science teams offering over 2,000 health experts worldwide. We are committed to serving health and science clients offering broad domain experience in animal science, autoimmune diseases, CAR-T, cell and gene therapy, generational AI, diagnostics, CNS, CRISPR, immuno-oncology, lysosomal diseases, medtech, medical devices, neurodegeneration, oncology, ophthalmology, precision medicines, rare diseases, regenerative medicine, and more. We've earned our clients' trust with 21 years in our sector and have developed over 450 communications plans.

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Norah Lawlor, Principal & CEO

Lawlor Media Group is a full-service, luxury lifestyle Public Relations and Marketing Agency with over 20 years experience in successfully meeting the needs of clients in diverse arenas including Beauty Health & Wellness, Charity Philanthropy & Not-for-Profit, Entertainment and the Arts, Technology, Fashion, FMCG, Commercial and Residential Real Estate development, Travel hospitality and night life.

Lawlor Media Group's expertise covers the entire spectrum of strategic Public Relations and marketing development—from branding, marketing, buzz building, crisis management, investor relations through political communications.



CEO of Matter, Scott Signore.

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Lou Rena Hammond, Founder
Stephen Hammond, CEO

Lou Hammond Group (LHG) is an award-winning firm specializing in the key industries of travel, economic development, destinations, culinary/spirits, real estate, lifestyle, and technology. With offices in New York, Atlanta, Charleston, Denver, Houston, Miami, Savannah, and Tampa, the agency has 45 employees offering brand development, public relations, digital strategy, social media management and analysis, creative programming, and marketing strategy.

For nearly 40 years, LHG has been an industry leader providing superior, results-driven services to clients globally. Founded by industry trailblazer Lou Hammond, the agency takes pride in remaining fiercely independent and departing from business-as-usual. LHG continues to grow with an emphasis on digital, social, design, advertising and branding in an ever-evolving media landscape. With quality and trust as guiding principles, LHG has developed a proven yet agile and strategic approach earning it recognition as one of the nation's most award-winning marketing and communications firms.

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Scott Signore, CEO & Principal
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Matter is a Brand Elevation Agency that integrates PR, marketing and creative services into content-rich campaigns that inspire action and build value. Founded in 2003, with offices throughout North America and 250+ employees, Matter works with the world's most innovative companies across high-technology, healthcare, consumer technology, professional services and consumer markets.

We are experts in storytelling. That means we're laser-focused on getting a client's message out and heard by the right audiences, in the right places. Our strategic communications programs maximize earned, owned, shared and paid media to tell—and show—credible brand stories.

We have in-house, award-winning video and podcast production capabilities as well as graphic design and web development services for projects big and small. Our creative, video and data-driven marketing teams work hand-in-hand with the PR teams to create high-performance assets that amplify brand stories, increase reach and drive ROI.

We understand how a campaign

can be brought to life across multiple platforms and mediums, and the interplay between the mix—elevating any brand.

Clients include: Aetna, Bangor Savings Bank, Beyond Identity, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island, Blue Yonder, Catalyst Health Group, Cisco Systems, Inc., CSG, CVS Health, CVS Pharmacy, Debiopharm, Evenflo, Everbridge, FloQast, Food Lion, Hitachi, Ltd., KPMG, Magnit, Mimecast, MIT Sloan Executive Education, Omnicare, Pluralsight, Quantum, RSM US LLP, SailPoint, SANS Institute, Sappi NA, symplr, Tricentis and Vicarious Surgical

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Matt Kucharski, President

Padilla is a full-service agency that transforms brands and organizations through strategically creative communications. Our work across deep areas of sector expertise in agriculture and environmental sciences, food, beverage and nutrition, health, technology and financial services, is consistently recognized by industry partners such as the PRWeek Awards, PProvoke IN2 SABRE Awards and PRSA Anvil Awards, among others. Padilla operates in seven cities in the U.S. through its family of brands, which includes, SHIFT (performance communications), FoodMinds (food and nutrition affairs) and Joe Smith (brand strategy). As an AVENIR GLOBAL company and a founding member of the Worldcom Public Relations Group, the agency provides services to clients through 155 offices worldwide. Transform with purpose at PadillaCo.com.

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Dan Martin, EVP, Healthcare
Juliana Allen, EVP
Gareth Thomas, Managing Director

PAN Communications is a leading integrated marketing and PR agency servicing B2B tech and healthcare brands. With 25+ years of experience, PAN helps companies transform ideas into captivating stories that align to mid- and late-stage growth strategies through the firm's NXT Stage approach. Recognized as an Agency of the Year and Best Mid-sized Agency to Work For, PAN has office locations in Boston, San Francisco, New York, Orlando, and London, as well as a growing virtual community. The agency is positioned to help brands emerge in new markets and scale globally, with experience driving integrated strategy across a variety of brands like Absolute Software, athenahealth, NTT Data, Qualtrics, Radial, and Veeam. PAN strives to help today's marketers by integrating a combination of services to better engage with target audiences, drive revenue, and move markets.

Clients include: Algolia, Amdocs, Amwell, athenahealth, Aurora Solar, Bitdefender, Booz Allen, Boston Consulting Group, Botify, Brightside Health, Clarify Health, iCIMS, LeanTaaS, Menlo Security, NTT Data, Qualtrics, Thales, Toshiba/Americas, UPS Capital and Veeam.

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Prosek Partners builds—and protects—the top brands in business. We are a certified Woman-Owned Business and among the largest independent, integrated communications and marketing firms globally.

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PROSEK PARTNERS

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Specializing in providing a full range of communications solutions to financial and professional services companies, Prosek delivers business impact through an unexpected level of passion, creativity and marketing savvy. Services include media relations, thought leadership, social and digital media, public affairs, investor relations, financial communications, transaction services, crisis communications and issues management, content creation, conference support, publishing, media training and more.

Prosek's strategic branding and integrated marketing arm—Prophecy by Prosek—offers brand strategy, award-winning design, digital and advertising capabilities.

Prosek has been named PRovoke's "Global and North American Corporate/Financial Agency of the Year" and a top-five global M&A and shareholder activism agency.

Clients include: Bridgewater, Carlyle Group, Citi, Edward Jones, Franklin Templeton, Gallagher, General Atlantic, Goldman Sachs, Hartford Funds, ICE, Man Group, Northwestern Mutual, Prudential, Rockefeller and SkyBridge Capital.

PUGH & TILLER PR

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Pugh & Tiller PR helps businesses and organizations reach, engage, and influence the right audiences in order to achieve their communications and business objectives.

Staffing accounts with senior-level executives, we have developed a lasting reputation for getting results by using an integrated approach to communications throughout our 15-year history. Our services include media and influencer relations, social

media, crisis communications, and marketing services—all anchored by strategic communications planning.

We focus on four industries: commercial real estate, healthcare, insurance and employee benefits, professional services, and technology. We also specialize in developing and executing communications plans to support M&A activity as well as helping international companies enter into and grow in the U.S. market.

Clients include: Alera Group, The Arc Baltimore, The Arc Maryland, Benefit Advisors Network, Blueprint Software Systems, dancker, Dream Finders Home, FieldBin, Fivestar, Future AI, GCG Financial, Infrascala, JMT | Architecture, National Assn. of Real Estate Brokers, National Center for Manufacturing Sciences, New Zealand Institute of Environmental Science and Research, Patient First, RailField Partners, Shawe Rosenthal, STRmix, Ltd. and The Traffic Group

The communications landscape is in constant flux, rife with challenges—and opportunities—for brands. Racepoint Global (RPG) is an independent integrated communications agency that helps tech-forward clients succeed by shaping and leading the conversations that matter.

RPG crafts customer-centric narratives and creates multi-channel communications strategies that influence, engage, and reach target audiences in authentic ways. For twenty years, RPG's work has established competitive differentiation and driven business impact.

RPG delivers a range of services, including foundational brand development work, earned media and traditional PR services, content development and events, executive visibility and thought leadership, and paid media. RPG creates award-winning client work and is consistently ranked among the top technology agencies.

To learn more about how we can help you shape conversations that matter, visit racepointglobal.com.

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Ruder Finn is one of the world's largest independent global communications and creative agencies. Founded in 1948, Ruder Finn



Read Jennifer Prosek's article "Culture During Times of Crisis" posted on odwyerpr.com.

has defined and redefined PR for 75 years, shaping communications that help move industry-defining brands, companies and leaders from what's now to what's next. Ruder Finn provides clients with bold communications strategies based on a global perspective and localized market knowledge that redefine leadership, reimagine the marketplace, and rethink customer experiences around a shared sense of purpose. The agency is organized around five core areas of expertise—Healthcare, Technology, Commerce, Leadership and Workplace—with RF.Studios and tech incubator RF.TechLab providing cutting-edge predictive analytics, breakthrough creative, and customer-focused digital engagement. Ruder Finn has offices across 3 continents including the U.S., Asia and Europe. Wholly owned agencies within Ruder Finn Group include: Ruder Finn Inc., Osmosis Films, Touchdown, Peppercomm, Comunicad, Mantis, RLA Collective, jacobstahl, RF Bloom, and SPI Group. For more information visit www.ruderrfinn.com.

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Slide Nine is a 100% women-owned, integrated marketing/communications agency. We take the friction out of storytelling and craft communications that shift perception and move people to action. With a core focus on brands that propel our economy, we have deep experience in energy, healthcare, agriculture, technology, manufacturing and professional services. Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, the Slide Nine team spans five states and serves clients across North America. For more information, visit www.slidenine.com

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(L to R) Slide Nine Agency owners co-owners Whitney Somerville, Lauren Parker and Ann Mulvany.

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Spectrum Science is the only full-service, fully integrated, science-driven, global marketing, communications and media agency under a single P&L. This independent agency delivers across advertising, communications, brand experience through multi-channel marketing, clinical trial recruitment, scientific strategy and medical communications, at all points in the company and product lifecycle.

Spectrum's team are experts in science—focused on strategic engagements with its client audiences. Fueled by its proprietary methodology, the Spectrumsitic Method, Spectrum leverages human-centered insights, atomic creative, innovative storytelling and technology to deliver the right solutions for each client's goals and reach their audiences where they are with the content they need and want.

Spectrum's interwoven model

integrates specialists across client service, strategy, creative and innovation to put clients at the center. Every engagement begins with a proprietary, insights-driven process steeped in data, science and human behavior that enables custom-built teams to work in lockstep to deliver atomic creative and game-changing activations to achieve each client's goals.

Not limited by geography, Spectrum works seamlessly across offices in DC, New York, Chicago and London—with global reach through Global Health Marketing & Communications (GHMC), the largest independent health and science communications agency partnership worldwide.

Seek out Spectrum for high-caliber, high-science communications and the elusive efficiencies of integrated solutions—as Spectrum is ready to go Beyond the Science Quo for you.

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Stanton provides strategic public relations and integrated com-

munications to clients across a spectrum of industry sectors and sizes, from global firms to mid-size leaders and entrepreneurial enterprises.

Clients are attracted to find a home at our firm because we deliver a unique blend of smart strategy, strong relationships, innovative thinking and first-class execution that produces business-changing results.

With teams in New York and California and a global network, we support our clients across a variety of communications disciplines including media relations, brand messaging, content development and marketing, executive visibility, thought leadership, digital marketing and social media, reputation & crisis management, and creative and design services. Our deep understanding of the business and financial world and the media covering it allows us to position clients effectively within a broader context. We employ a "practitioner model" where our senior professionals spend the vast majority of their time on client work. We ask tough questions, challenge assumptions, and suggest bold solutions. Flexibility, collaboration, responsiveness, and bureaucracy-free service are the hallmarks of our client relationships.

Clients include 3i Capital, Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty Insurance, Arklight Capital Assurant, Bain Capital, Carl Marks Advisors, Conning Asset

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GLADSTONE PLACE

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Management, CSAA Insurance Group, CVC Capital Partners, EmPRO Insurance, First Eagle Alternative Credit, FFL Capital Partners, HGGC Capital, Hometap, Kline Hill Capital Partners, Makena Capital, Marin Health, Moss-er Living Real Estate, Northleaf Capital Partners, OceanSound Partners, One Equity Partners, One Inc. Payments Rackspace Technology, Schulte Roth & Zabel, Sun Capital Partners Summit Health/City MD, Toorak Capital Real Estate, VSS Capital Partners and Winston & Strawn

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Stanton Communications, Inc., is a strategic public relations firm providing counsel and program implementation to clients across the globe. We are fully independent and wholly dedicated to advancing our clients' business goals through creative communication.

For more than 30 years, the firm has enjoyed a reputation for combining serious strategic thinking with service excellence, and for blending insightful strategy with tremendous agility. We build our teams with a balance of talent so clients benefit from the best we have to offer.

Among our clients are some of the world's most successful organizations in multiple industry sectors including energy, technology, hospitality and lifestyle, professional societies and industry associations. We provide a range of services from issue communication and public affairs to strategic communication planning, reputation enhancement, media relations and thought leadership, crisis mitigation and spokesperson preparation.

On behalf of our clients, Stanton Communications has won more than 50 industry awards including multiple Silver Anvils, the public relations profession's highest honor. We are consistently named among the Agency Elite Top 100 in *PR News*' listing and have been named the Best Small Agency in America by *The Holmes Report*, in addition to multiple citations as one of the Best Places to Work by the Washington Business Journal.

Clients, among others, include: GE Grid Solutions, GE Renewable Energy, American Society for Nondestructive testing, American Statistical Assn., International Coaching Federation, International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis/World Thrombosis Day, Live! Casino & Hotel, Quad Graphics, and W. L. Gore & Associates.

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Celebrating its 20th anniversary, Trevelino/Keller continues to place emphasis on talent retention in today's empowered workforce environment. It could not be more humbled by its ability to maintain the industry's number one talent retention, having lost two people to agencies in 20 years. The firm's management team [average tenure of 16 years] has successfully incubated new talent, supported by its TKU professional development platform and innovative reward offerings like its Wild Blue Yonder [WBY], a travel curated program that sends staff members into the Wild Blue Yonder on vacation getaways around the world where they can play, then choose to extend their stay and take advantage of its flex workplace. Its T/K Niners program is an off-shoot that rewards staff on their ninth anniversary with a personal getaway.

On the business development side, its pioneering reputation marketing approach powered by public relations, growth marketing and creative services, resonates with an increasing number of emerging and middle market companies wanting a single source solution. And more companies are responding favorably to the firm's "NoGo" policy of No Long-term Contracts, No Minimums and No

Mark-ups.

Ranked as the #2 Atlanta-based firm, its home on Atlanta's burgeoning urban westside, speaks to its progressive culture that sets a tone unique to the public relations marketplace. Dominating in technology while successfully growing healthcare, financial services, government, lifestyle and franchising, the firm's client base cuts across the country and increasingly more often, around the world.

Initiatives like T/K SmallBiz—www.tksmallbiz.com—designed to serve more traditional small businesses and its public education initiative Voice4Change—www.voice4changeproject.com—are examples of its efforts to support and serve the under resourced. Additionally, the firm continues to operate Winepreneurs, its entrepreneur program that brings entrepreneurs, investors and influencers together to connect and thrive.

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V2 Communications is the public relations and digital communications firm for disruptive global brands, redefining what it means to be a strategic communications partner. V2 is a full-service agency helps brands navigate the complexities that define communications today to drive business success and growth. The firm's skilled professionals combine a business mindset and creative thinking to provide the strategic counsel, campaign ideas and results that move businesses forward.

V2's services span public relations, corporate communications, content, social and creative, allowing us to seamlessly deliver high-impact, integrated communications campaigns. V2 works with a broad spectrum of clients across B2B, climate tech and healthcare technologies. The team is proud to partner with brands including UiPath, Rocket Software, Breakthrough Energy Ventures and Current Health, a Best Buy Health

Company.

Among the many awards for its work, culture, leadership and growth, V2 Communications was named #65 on *O'Dwyer's* list of top PR firms; it also regularly appears on top places to work lists both in the communications industry and the Boston area.

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Vested is a global and integrated communications and marketing agency focused exclusively on the financial services industry. One of the world's largest financial services agencies with offices in the US, the UK and Canada, Vested creates and delivers award-winning integrated programs for financial brands both big and small, including AON, Bloomberg, Morgan Stanley, and more. We attract and retain the industry's best talent through our equity ownership model and entrepreneurial approach—from unlimited vacation days to sabbaticals. Entrepreneurial to the core, Vested launched the industry's first agency-run investment group, Vested Ventures, acquired business journalism site Talking Biz News and digital marketing and web development agency Red Lab, and launched creative hub Finance Studio.

The agency supports a range of firms across the financial spectrum, including banks, asset managers, private wealth, capital markets firms, industry associations, fintech companies and more. Clients include: Aon, Bailard, Bloomberg, DTCC, Diebold Nixdorf, Finastra, Morgan Stanley Wealth, Museum of American Finance, NEPC, SEI, and more. ○

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



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"One of a kind resource for anyone involved in public relations—from clients to potential clients, from recent graduates to experienced practitioners—this is the directory to have close at hand."

—Fraser Seitel, PR consultant, author & New York University adjunct professor

"The O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms is the most trusted resource for PR firm profiles and a platform for their brands. I have been a very satisfied user for my 33 years in PR."

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—Robert L. Dilenschneider, The Dilenschneider Group

"A phenomenal job-seeking aid."

—Marie Raperto, CIMSearch

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—Henry P. Feintuch, Feintuch Communications

Winning back media trust, one AR-15 at a time

By Fraser Seitel

What's America's biggest problem? Inequality? Inflation? Immigration? Crime? Trump? Marjorie Taylor Greene? Odell Beckham, Jr.? Stephen A. Smith? No. The answer is guns.



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*.

Specifically: Military-caliber assault weapons designed for war, like semi-automatic AR-15s and fully automatic AR-57s, which have been the weapon of choice for mass murderers, especially in the 377 U.S. school shootings since the Columbine massacre in 1999. The majority of Americans agree there's no

earthly reason why such weapons should be available for purchase by ordinary citizens. That's why most other civilized nations outlaw them.

The United States, too, once had a federal Assault Weapons ban, but that law expired in 2004, paving the way for the 350 deaths and 450 injuries caused by these weapons in subsequent years. Today, nine states have banned assault weapons. All of these states have two Democrat Senators. Indeed, the only reason the federal ban on military-style weapons is no longer law is that Republican senators are scared of the National Rifle Association and what the right-wing kooks who dominate the party might do to them if they support its reintroduction.

Meanwhile, the U.S. House of Representatives has suffered no such reluctance to do what American voters overwhelmingly favor. Last August, the House voted to approve a new ban on assault weapons. But Senate Republicans remain fearful of challenging the Second Amendment and, therefore, remain too cowardly to do the right thing. No wonder, according to the latest Gallup poll, only a measly seven percent of Americans have "a lot of confidence" in the U.S. Congress.

At the same time, Gallup also reports that Americans rank the national news media nearly as lowly as they do Congress. In other words, most people are convinced that the media are as partisan, clueless and gutless as politicians. And it's not just purpose-

ly-biased networks like MSNBC and Fox who have lost respect; it's everybody from CNN to PBS to NPR to *The New York Times*.

This is bad news not only for reporters and editors and bloggers but for public relations professionals who work through the media to persuade people to support their positions, endorse their candidates or buy their products.

So, how can the media begin to win back public trust? Here's an idea: Go after vulnerable Republican senators on an issue on which most Americans agree: banning assault weapons. By "go after," I mean applying unrelenting pressure on the following five Republican senatorial fence-sitters from states whose voters may be more sympathetic to common sense gun laws.

Marco Rubio

The Senior Senator from Florida has studiously strengthened his stature over more than a decade in the Senate. Rubio's long-term goal is to become President, and there's no question that when Republicans once again gain the White House, Rubio will be among the first elevated to Cabinet status.

On gun control, Sen. Rubio has been characteristically opaque, hemming and hawing his way around the issue to avoid controversy. Most disturbing, he refused to take a stand on assault weapons in 2018, when a 19-year-old nutcase murdered 17 people and injured 17 others at Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in his home state.

But today, with Floridians not nearly as gun-lovingly right-wing as neighboring states like South Carolina and Alabama and with Rubio nursing higher office ambitions, a concerted media effort to dislodge him from his assault weapons waffling seems well worth the effort.

Rick Scott

Rubio's junior senatorial partner, former Florida Gov. Rick Scott, is another viable candidate to find religion on gun control. Unlike his Florida colleague, Sen. Scott isn't particularly likable. In fact, Scott himself unabashedly admits, "I'm seeking to become the least popular man in Washington." He's succeeding.

Scott's tenure as Chairman of the 2022 National Republican Senatorial Committee was disastrous. He followed that up with a futile challenge to replace Mitch McConnell as Senate Minority Leader. And he was then fingered by President Biden as the author of a secret Republican plan threatening everyone's beloved Medicare and Social Security.

Scott is up for reelection in 2024, and he's not trending well. But he's counting on his

"independence" to win the day with Florida's largely libertarian voters. One way to impress the voters with that independence—even for the NRA-favoring Scott—is to break ranks yet again in favor of the assault weapons ban. Five years ago, just three weeks after the Parkland massacre, then-Gov. Scott defied the gun lobby to sign into law a sweeping set of gun regulations. The media should lean on the Senator to restore that precedent in today's climate of rampant mass shootings.

Shelley Moore Capito

The relatively-silent Republican Senator from West Virginia seems content to let her on-again/off-again Democrat colleague Joe Manchin lap up most of the publicity.

Capito is mostly known for being the daughter of beloved former West Virginia Gov. Arch Moore, who served more than a decade in the state's highest office as well as three years in federal prison on corruption charges.

Sen. Capito generally keeps her head down but did support last year's bipartisan Safer Communities Act in the Senate, which dealt with school safety, mental health and background checks.

West Virginia ranks fifth among states in terms of gun ownership, and its state laws are weak in terms of red flag warnings, campus carry and gun safety in general. Nonetheless, West Virginians are inarguably more rational about possessing assault weapons than their brethren in gun-worshipping states like Montana, Wyoming and Texas. So, turning the media spotlight on a shrinking mountain violet like Capito makes sense.

Todd Young

Another Republican Senator nobody-ever-heard of is Todd Young of Indiana. The reason you haven't heard much about Young is there's nothing much there. The best thing you can say about him is that at least he's not as hopeless as his Republican colleague, Sen. Mike Braun.

Unlike gun lobby lemming Braun, Young was surprisingly willing to risk his \$3 million NRA donation by voting with Capito and 14 other Republican Senators in favor of last year's Senate gun control bill.

In a Republican-leaning Midwest state where demand has been building for stricter gun laws, media pressure on Sen. Young to take the next step to distinguish himself from the risk-averse Braun might be just what he needs to renounce assault weapons on the national stage.

— Continued on next page

Strategic planning checklist

By Dominic Rovano

Proper strategic planning is crucial for achieving positive financial results in any business, including public relations agencies. By dedicating time and effort to developing and executing a well-defined strategic plan, businesses can position themselves for success in the competitive market.



Dominic Rovano, CPA is a partner at Janover LLC and leads the firm's Professional Services Group.

One way a strategic plan can positively impact financial results is by increasing revenue through the identification of new

market opportunities or the expansion of existing service lines. By identifying potential growth areas and investing in the necessary resources to pursue them, businesses can open up new revenue streams and increase their bottom line. Additionally, a well-executed strategic plan can help businesses reduce costs and increase efficiency, which can also lead to improved financial results.

Another benefit of a well-crafted strategic plan is improved client satisfaction, which can translate to higher revenue through increased business from existing clients and positive word-of-mouth referrals. By prioritizing client needs and incorporating feedback into the strategic planning process, businesses can build stronger relationships with their clients and differentiate themselves from competitors.

Strategic planning can also positively impact employee retention, which can lead to financial benefits through increased productivity and reduced costs associated with turnover. By creating a culture and work environment that aligns with the values and goals of employees, businesses can improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates.

Consider the following points as you reassess your planning strategy:

Establish your vision, mission and values

Before you begin to map out your strategic planning process, dedicate time to establishing or reevaluating the vision, mission and values of your business. Your vision process should describe what you want to achieve in the long term, while your mission should outline your agency's purpose. Your values should reflect the key principles and

beliefs that guide your agency's behavior and decision-making.

During the vision process, you should consider the key values of your company and employees, how you can better support your client base and the direction you want to grow in the future. Inviting employees into the process by encouraging their input can also help you connect to your staff and better understand their wants, needs, goals and plans for the future while ensuring their buy-in for your business vision. While the process should primarily involve company leaders and other key stakeholders, it can be beneficial to involve an objective third party to help you brainstorm and craft a thoughtful vision, mission and values document and statement.

The process

Identify goals and objectives. After you've identified the desired future state of your business, you can begin to focus on objectives that align with your vision, mission and values and move you toward your business goals. Goals—such as improving client satisfaction or increasing revenue—are typically part of the bigger picture, while objectives are narrower and specify how you can achieve those goals, such as establishing a strategy that reduces your financial and tax burdens, growing in a different market, developing a new service to offer your clients or cultivating a thriving workplace that helps you retain quality employees that support your clients. Many companies choose to implement SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound) goals to help ensure that your objectives are realistic and achievable.

Formulate and implement a plan. Now that you've identified your goals, you can begin mapping out your plans with specific steps, including determining a budget, creating your timeline and deciding who on your team is responsible for each objective. You may choose to utilize a project planning tool to help with accountability and organization. It's crucial to identify your key performance indicators to help you measure your results.

Measure and evaluate results. While planning and executing may seem like the most important components of your strategic planning, you should identify ways to record your results and determine when to evaluate your plans on an ongoing basis. You may do this in many ways, including implementing dashboarding to access real-time financial and operational data or by understanding your client satisfaction through surveys. Once you have this infor-

mation, remember to adjust your plans accordingly as needed. For example, if one of your determined objectives is to increase a service line by cross-selling and you aren't seeing additional growth, consider focusing on this area by providing more employee training or sales incentivization.

Continually reassess and adjust your plans. Strategic planning is an ongoing process, and it's important to periodically reassess your vision, mission and values, as well as your goals and objectives. This can help ensure that your agency stays on track and remains relevant in a rapidly changing industry.

When we're busy supporting clients and executing day-to-day tasks, we often lose sight of our strategic plan and vision. Realigning your vision, mission and values and identifying specific objectives can help keep you focused while energizing your employees as you collectively meet your goals. Overall, a well-defined and executed strategic plan can result in a range of positive financial outcomes for public relations agencies. By focusing on revenue growth, cost reduction, client satisfaction and employee retention, businesses can position themselves for success in the market and achieve their long-term goals. **○**

WINNING BACK MEDIA TRUST

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Mitt Romney

Finally, there's the well-known former Presidential candidate from the gun-loving state of Utah.

In recent years, Romney has become the elder statesman "voice of reason" in a Trump-dominated party that seems to be headed, inexorably, over a cliff—despite being on the right side of many issues. November's Senate elections—where Republicans served up disastrous candidates—were but the latest examples of the Grand Old Party snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

Republicans' unyielding support of assault weapons will no doubt prove the next—final?—nail in the coffin. Unless someone like Romney steps in.

In Utah, the Romney name is bulletproof, which has allowed the Senator to speak out on principle while fellow Republicans cower in fear of angering Trump and his band of followers. Sen. Romney has relentlessly led the charge to challenge the embittered former President and the pall he has left on the party.

Were Sen. Romney, similarly, to do "the right thing" by renouncing assault weapons, he might just be able to help rescue Republicans from another catastrophic electoral defeat in 2024. **○**

Biden's CoS Klain to head O'Melveny's crisis unit

Ron Klain, who was President Biden's Chief of Staff until Feb., has returned to O'Melveny, where he will head the law firm's strategic counseling and crisis management practice.

He will advise top executives at healthcare, technology, transportation, infrastructure, private equity and finance companies about pressing geopolitical and reputation risks.

Klain was a Partner at O'Melveny from 1999 to 2004. Prior to joining the firm, he was Assistant to President Clinton and Chief of Staff to VP Al Gore.

In 2009, Klain became an Aide to President Obama and Chief of Staff to VP Biden. He joined Biden's presidential campaign and was named White House Chief by President-Elect Biden in November 2020.

In the Biden White House, Klain was responsible for overseeing the passage of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act, Infrastructure and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act and the confirmation of a record number of federal judges by a new President. ○



Ron Klain

Commerce Dept. vet Carrillo to Tusk

Bernadette Carrillo, who was Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the Commerce Dept., has joined Tusk Strategies as a Managing Director at its Washington office.

She coordinated Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo's communications with governors and mayors across the nation.

Carrillo also promoted the Biden administration's Build Back Better Challenge, Internet for All and Chips and Science Act initiatives.

Prior to the Commerce Dept., Carrillo served as Director of Strategic Partnerships at the Economic Development Administration and Senior Associate Director in the White House's Office of Personnel. She has private sector experience, gained via a stint as Senior Government Affairs Manager at PepsiCo.

At Tusk, Carrillo will handle public affairs, policy and advocacy issues. ○



Bernadette Carrillo

Subject Matter merges with Kivvit

Subject Matter, the D.C.-based advocacy shop, is acquiring Kivvit, which ranks No. 18 in O'Dwyer's rankings with 2022 fees of \$39.5 million.

Coral Tree Partners, the Los Angeles private equity firm, acquired Subject Matter in 2022.

Will Wynperle, Partner at Coral Tree Partners, said the deal establishes a sizable new entity with a national footprint that is positioned for immediate growth.

Chicago-headquartered Kivvit has offices in New York, Asbury Park, DC, and Miami.

Wynperle anticipates the merger "is the first of a number of strategic acquisitions that help create the agency model of the future."

Subject Matter CEO Nicole Cornish will head the merged Subject Matter+Kivvit firm, which will have more than 200 staffers.

Kivvit COO Molly Scherrman will retain her title at the revamped firm. ○



Tesla drives to Pioneer Public Affairs

Elon Musk's Tesla has hired Washington-based Pioneer Public Affairs to deal with issues related to the implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act, federal fleet electrification and battery supply chain issues.

Pioneer president Joe Britton handles the account. He is a 15-year veteran of Capitol Hill. He served as Chief of Staff to Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Legislative Director for Sen. Mark Udall (D-CO) and Legislative Assistant to Sen Ben Nelson (D-NE).

Tesla also uses Cassidy & Assocs. for D.C. support. It paid Cassidy \$80,000 during the first-quarter for its work regarding vehicle electrification.

Cassidy CEO Kai Anderson and COO Jordan Bernstein spearhead the firm's six-member Tesla team. ○

DCI Group names Faña for Strategic Alliance unit

D.C.-based public affairs firm DCI Group has hired Carissa Faña as a Managing Director in its strategic alliance practice.

Faña comes to DCI from legal firm Becker and Poliakoff, where she was a Government Relations Consultant. Before that, she was at financial technology platform Intuit, managing external relations with policymakers, key stakeholders and a broad coalition of national Latino and multicultural third-party organizations.

At DCI, Faña will provide expertise in the areas of coalition building, third-party outreach, stakeholder engagement, and diversity, equity and inclusion. ○



Carissa Faña

Dentons taps BlackRock's Vertiz

Dentons Global Advisors has recruited BlackRock's Alvaro Vertiz to lead its Mexico City offering and bolster growth in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Vertiz was COO and Head of Business Strategy and Strategic Partnerships at BlackRock Mexico. He managed day-to-day operations and bolstered its ESG practice.

Prior to BlackRock, Vertiz was General Counsel at Prudential Real Estate Investors Latin America. ○



Alvaro Vertiz

Lou Hammond books Dubai economy and tourism

Lou Hammond Group has picked up Dubai Economy and Tourism as the emirate works to increase the number of visitors from North America.


Chairman/founder Lou Hammond sees tremendous opportunities to showcase one of the world's most innovative cities to a diverse range of audiences.

The number of visitors to Dubai in 2022 almost reached the 16.7 million pre-pandemic level.

Western Europe and the Gulf countries accounted for 21 percent of Dubai's arrivals in 2022. South Asia generated 17 percent, while the Americas contributed seven percent.

Dubai wants to be one of the world's top three cities for tourism and business by 2033.

Lou Hammond Group will coordinate its work for Dubai with Reach Global Marketing, which is heading PR in the Canadian market.

Gina Stouffer, President of Lou Hammond Group Charleston, oversees the Dubai business. The shop currently represents 30 destinations. 

Ballard Partners works for Japan


Japan has hired Ballard Partners, the well-connected Republican firm, to bolster its relationship with the U.S.

Ballard Partners will provide strategic consulting and advocacy services to the Japanese embassy in connection with its business with U.S. federal agencies, Congress, state legislatures and

executive agencies of state governments, according to its contract signed April 10 by Koichi Ai, minister and head of chancery.

The pact became effective April 1 and runs through June. Ballard Partners' fee is \$25,000 a month.

Brian Ballard heads the six-member lobbying team that includes Senior Partner Syl Lukis, Managing Partner Jose Diaz; and Partners Dane Eagle, Adrian Lukis and Courtney Coppola.

He headed Donald Trump's fundraising efforts in Florida. 


Prime Policy Group reps banned Albanian politico

Prime Policy Group is representing Sali Berisha, the former President and Prime Minister of Albania, under a six-month pro-bono agreement that went into effect on April 10.

Secretary of State Anthony Blinken on May 19, 2021 banned Berisha and his family from traveling to the U.S. due to involvement in significant corruption in his capacity as prime minister.

"Berisha was involved in corrupt acts, such as misappropriation of public funds and interfering with public processes, including using his power for his own benefit and to enrich his political allies and his family members at the expense of the Albanian public's confidence in their government institutions and public officials," said Blinken in announcing the travel ban.

Berisha, who is 78, has denied any wrongdoing and blamed financier George Soros for his problems, according to The Washington Diplomat.

Prime Policy Group Founding Chairman Charlie Black, who heads the work, believes his client has been unfairly banned from the U.S. and wants Congress to investigate the matter. 

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.

Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered April 7, 2023 for Hong Kong Trade Development Council**, Washington, D.C., regarding outreach for the principal concerning issues related to U.S.-Hong Kong economic and trade relations and other matters of interest.

APCO Worldwide LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered March 7, 2023 for The Centre for a European Future**, Brussels, Belgium, regarding providing strategic communications services within the United States to promote the principal's Belarus program focusing on the promotion of democracy in Belarus, advocacy for alignment with Europe and its Ukraine program focusing on Ukraine's territorial integrity, and more.

The Van Aucker Group, Alexandria, Va., **registered April 18, 2023 as a subcontractor to LB International Solutions, for Embassy of Türkiye (Turkey)**, Washington, D.C., regarding providing lobbying and government relations services.

Lobbying News



NEW LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT FILINGS

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

Atrio Consulting Group, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered April 18, 2023 for Air Marshal National Council**, Orlando, Fla., concerning issues related to Federal Air Marshals and homeland security.

Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered April 11, 2023 for Live Nation Entertainment, Inc.**, Beverly Hills, Calif., regarding issues related to event ticket sales legislation.

GrayRobinson PA, Tallahassee, Fla., **registered April 17, 2023 for America's Newspapers**, Lawrenceville, Ga., regarding issues related to newspapers.

Green Mountain Strategies LLC, Peru, Vt., **registered April 19, 2023 for Major League Baseball Players Association**, New York, N.Y., regarding labor laws and regulations affecting the terms and conditions of employment for professional baseball players.

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Established in 2005, JPR has consistently risen as a leader in the travel and hospitality spaces. Today, the agency's growing portfolio spans many markets outside of travel and hospitality, with clients in lifestyle, culinary, real estate, and wellness. JPR's global roster includes more than 120+ hotels in the U.S., U.K. and throughout Europe, Mexico, Caribbean, Africa and more. JPR represents destinations such as North Carolina and Utah as well as flagship hospitality brands including Hilton Luxury Brands, Virgin Limited Edition, Relais & Châteaux, Vail Hospitality and Iconic Luxury Hotels.

JPR is continuously listed on the Observer's annual "PR Power 50" as one of the country's most powerful PR firms and Crain's "Best Places to Work in New York City." The agency also garnered "Top Places to Work" by PR News and received a Five Star rating in Forbes inaugural list of "America's Best PR Agencies," in addition to multiple trade and consumer awards for company culture and brand success. An industry innovator, JPR became the first travel PR agency to launch a podcast in 2018, Priority Status.

Jamie Sigler O'Grady, Sarah Evans, partners

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