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THE
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AWARDS



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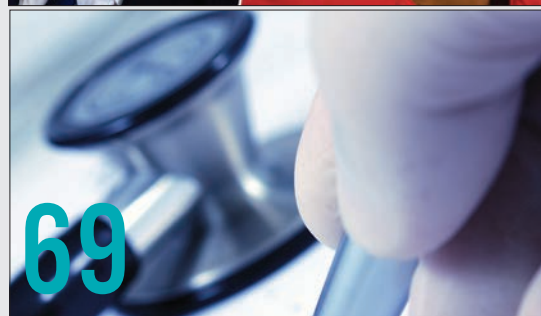
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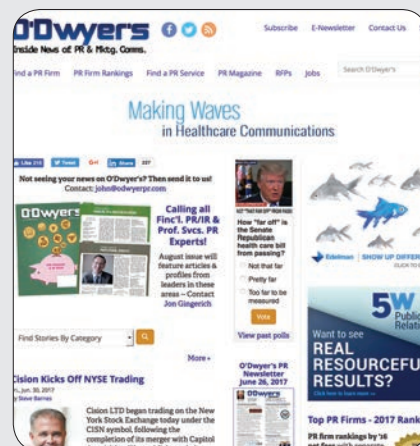
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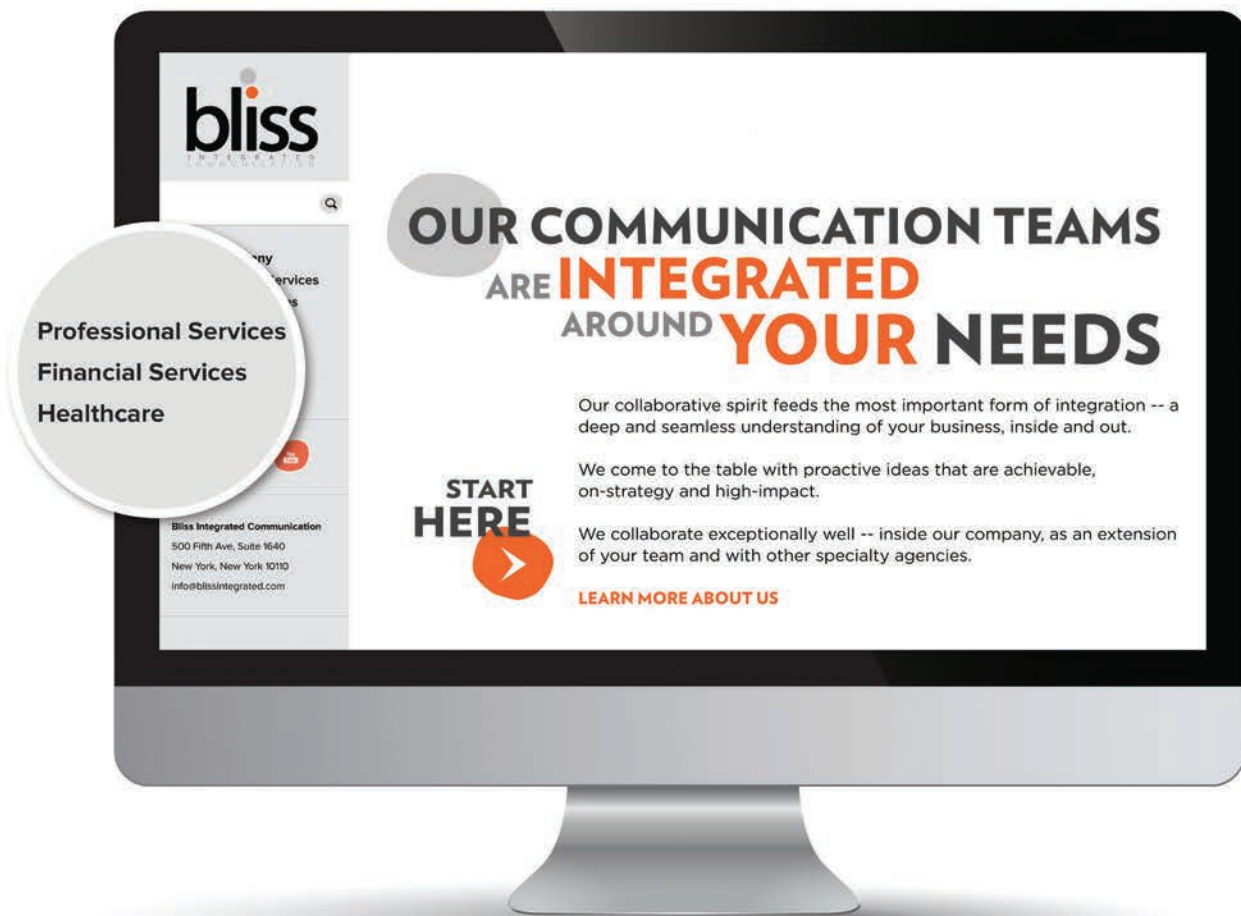
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Stand tall, NFL

Four years ago, Donald Trump chided President Obama for pressuring the Washington Redskins football team to change its name, a moniker that offends millions of Americans.

The New Yorker apparently felt that taking on the Redskins was a sideshow, diverting the then-Commander-in-Chief's attention from more pressing matters of state. (Speaking of sideshows, Trump served as unofficial spokesperson for the birther movement, which has since evolved into the Trumpian effort to expunge any sign of Obama and his eight years of accomplishments from the White House.)

How odd then that President Trump has now put the National Football League on his top priority list, with whom he has been embroiled in a First Amendment tussle regarding the controversial practice of some of its players refusing to stand during the National Anthem.

My esteemed colleague, Fraser Seitel, recently examined Trump's plunge into the world of professional sports and protest (see page 70). He wrote:

"President Knucklehead Smith tweeted that players who knelt during the anthem should be fired, thus reigniting the unwanted, unneeded and ultimately unwinnable firestorm.

"Why, you may ask, would anyone volunteer to restart a debate on such an incendiary and unrelated issue? Answer: Because he's President and you're not."

As it turns out, there's several very good reasons for Trump to take on the issue of football players who take a knee during the games.

Hello, ObamaCare

The Senate lost another chance to repeal ObamaCare, this time with the Graham/Cassidy bill, which, until its eventual September defeat, would have stripped 30 million Americans from healthcare coverage. Even supporter Senator Chuck Grassley said he had at least 10 reasons to vote against it.

Trump, of course, campaigned on a promise to kill ObamaCare and replace it with "something terrific" that was going to be cheaper for consumers and the government.

As Trump told a campaign rally in Las Vegas: "You will end up with great healthcare for a fraction of the cost and that will take place immediately after we go in. Immediately! Fast! Quick!"

Meanwhile, Trump slacked in his response to Puerto Rico, which still doesn't have power after Hurricane Maria battered the island in September, destroying huge portions of its infrastructure and leaving its people desperately in need of food and water.

And there's the ongoing threat of a confrontation with North Korea, which in September accused the U.S. of declaring war and vowed to shoot down any American bomber flying inside or outside its airspace.

The football imbroglio is a godsend for Trump, shifting attention from many of his empty promises.

Voters sack Trump on NFL fight

While the nation remains deeply divided on Trump's position regarding players who kneel during the playing of the National Anthem, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of Americans in "swing states" believe the President shouldn't focus on his battle with the NFL, according to a survey released in September by Republican PA firm Firehouse Strategies.

Nearly four in 10 (39 percent) disagree with the President, while 38 percent agree with him, with the remaining 23 percent of respondents "not sure."

The poll surveyed people in Florida, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Ohio who are likely to vote in the mid-term elections next year.

Firehouse's three partners worked on the presidential campaign of Florida Senator Marco Rubio, with Terry Sullivan serving as campaign manager, Alex Conant serving as communications director, and Will Holley working on legal matters and delegate strategy.

NFL kicks off crisis pro search

In the weeks following its fallout with President Trump over the National Anthem controversy, the National Football League has issued a job listing for a senior communications strategist.

Duties include "proactively developing plans and strategies aimed at publicly positioning the NFL to key audiences through all communications channels, both traditional and emerging media."

The successful candidate will create messaging to reflect the NFL's wide range of priorities, expedite organizational decision-making and provide crisis counseling to executives.

Eight years of communications or journalism experience, expertise in storytelling and issues management is required.

The league wants a person with intense work habits, who speaks his or her mind and is "comfortable working in a diverse environment."

Corporate, sports or entertainment communications experience is preferred. ○

— Kevin McCauley

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86%

of pharma professionals ranked the importance of delivering on patient-focused missions as greater than 8 out of 10.

ONLY

21%

expressed confidence in their own company delivering on these missions.

Source: The Aurora Project, 2016

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Fake news undermines trust in social media

The National Journal's latest survey of D.C. insiders shows that many in Capitol Hill are retreating from social media, with a growing number now viewing this platform as an unreliable channel for staying informed and sharing information.

By Jon Gingrich

Americans' inability to discern fake news from factual reporting has damaged Washington insiders' confidence in social media as a resource for informing the public, according to a recent National Journal study that identified what media outlets policy influencers rely on today to stay informed.

According to the National Journal's latest Washington in the Information Age survey, more than 90 percent of Washington insiders said they're confident in their own ability to decipher fiction from actual reporting. However, a whopping 81 percent also claimed they no longer trust the general public's ability to do the same.

Only 23 percent of this influential demographic said they trust online-only media brands as a source of news, and trust in social media platforms stands at only 15 percent.

As a result, policy makers seem to be shying away from using social media as a means of sharing news or information with colleagues, exhibiting a decline of almost five percent since 2015. On the other hand, text messaging for the same purpose has skyrocketed, up 20 percent, as has in-person communication and private messaging apps.

The fake news pariah seems to have especially affected D.C. insiders' perceptions of Facebook: nearly 20 percent fewer respondents said they relied on this platform to discover news items in 2017 than last year.

Policy makers still seem to recognize social media's strengths in discovering the news (especially Twitter), as well as its capabilities as a brand-building platform (LinkedIn). Although LinkedIn's usage has shrunk by several percentage points on the beltway in 2017 compared to years prior, and while Twitter has increased steadily every year for the past three years, Facebook remains D.C. insiders' most common platform for both work and personal use, according to the survey, followed by LinkedIn and Twitter.

Still, only about one in five respondents said information they find on social media now regularly influences their policy-related decision or actions — a five percent dip from last year — and less than a third — 29 percent — said they now rely on information they find on social media to help shape their opinions. Fewer respondents this year

also cited accessing information on social media as an important part of their daily work, and only 50 percent said they expected to rely more on social media to help them do their job in the coming years, a 10 percent decline from last year.

Overall, national media brands gauged the highest marks for trust among Washington insiders and are still the resources utilized most when catching up to speed with current events, followed by beltway-specific publications. However, more than a quarter of respondents — 27 percent — also said they're now less likely to trust their preferred news sources as well. Those identifying as Republicans revealed the greatest declines in preferred mainstream news trust, while Democrats' trust in their preferred sources actually increased. Re-

publicans also tended to trust online news brands less than Democrats (17 percent vs. 29 percent, respectively), while distrust of social media platforms remained the same among both parties (16 percent).

Regardless of their perceived distrust of social media, 63 percent still said they found themselves consuming news and information from more new sources in 2017 than ever.

The National Journal's Washington in the Information Age 2017 study surveyed more than 1,100 senior-level policy professionals in Washington between late May and June. The research and media brand's annual survey polled more than 150 Capitol Hill staff, more than 600 public affairs professionals and more than 400 federal executives. ○

Leaders beat influencers at winning earned media

By Jon Gingrich

The use of influencers to boost marketing campaigns' visibility has grown wildly popular in recent years, but according to a recent survey of journalists and in-house brand communicators released by D S Simon Media, the press doesn't appear to be nearly as enthusiastic about the practice.

In fact, despite hundreds of millions being spent annually by agencies on external spokespersons such as actors, artists, athletes and social media stars, D S Simon Media's Brand Authenticity Survey suggests that leveraging third-party spokespersons may not be nearly as effective when it comes to gaining earned media opportunities or crafting an authentic message as a brand's own in-house leaders.

An overwhelming majority of those polled for the survey — 82 percent — said they believe outside spokespersons are the least authentic representatives for a product or service, rating less effective than either paid or unpaid product users.

The same principle holds for non-profits, with 87 percent of respondents claiming they find third-party spokespersons to be the least authentic representatives for charitable causes.

Instead, the survey suggests that a company's in-house leaders or experts are far more effective at enhancing a brand's reputation and credibility, as well as gaining

earned media opportunities with the press.

84 percent of journalists polled said they prefer a brand's in-house spokesperson to be available for interview opportunities as opposed to paid third-parties. And in the non-profit realm, that figure was even higher, at 90 percent.

Nearly three quarters — 74 percent — of journalists polled also said making a CEO available for media comment especially makes a brand appear to be more authentic.

Finally, when asked where journalists get their ideas for stories, 82 percent cited social media, potentially underscoring an urgency for companies to provide leadership a platform and presence on social platforms.

Speaking on the study's findings D S Simon Media CEO and president Doug Simon told *O'Dwyer's* that "If you believe authenticity drives your organization's goals, you need to be focusing on turning your leaders and experts into influencers by featuring them in campaigns that earn media."

DS Simon Media's Brand Authenticity Survey 2017 was conducted throughout the summer of 2017 by online survey company Survey Monkey. It polled more than 200 journalists, including magazine and newspaper reporters, bloggers and TV and radio station producers, as well as more than 200 brand communicators. ○

Social responsibility is driving brand perception

When it comes to what drives a brand's perceived authenticity, a growing number of consumers say management's behavior and the ways in which organizations impact society are widely responsible for influencing their opinions of a company.

By Jon Gingerich

The behavior of management and the ways in which an organization impacts society are now widely responsible for people's perceptions of a company. And if the numbers are any indication, many of the world's top companies aren't considering the political and societal forces influencing their reputations as well as their brands' ability to maintain relevance with today's audiences, according to a study of global consumers released by Fleishman-Hillard.

The report, which sought to measure the divide between consumers' expectations and their actual experiences with global companies, suggests that the private sector needs to play a greater role in the issues of the day and pay more attention to the myr-

riad external factors influencing their storytelling, lest they risk becoming irrelevant in the eyes of consumers. Specifically, the study found that about half of those polled — 51 percent — said their perceptions of a company were influenced merely by their expectations of its products and services. However, almost the same number — 49 percent — said their perceptions of a company are now shaped by information regarding how its management behaves and the impact that the company is having on society as a whole.

Consumers across the world now widely recognize companies' societal influence, and a growing number expect the private sector to play a more active role in solving social issues. Almost three-quarters—74

percent — said they wanted companies to go beyond mandated regulations, and 63 percent said they believe companies should lead the charge when it comes to driving the world's interchange of ideas, products and cultures. A vast majority — 81 percent — also said they believe a company's ethical treatment of its employees goes beyond pay and benefits and also includes notions of equality and inclusivity.

A large percentage of this responsibility, according to consumers, falls on the shoulders of management. More than three-quarters — 78 percent — said the behaviors and integrity of a CEO reflect the belief system of the company he/she leads. On the other hand, consumers were three times more trusting of a companies' employees than its CEO when it comes to delivering the truth regarding how a company behaves.

Consumers will always place value at a premium, but the study also shows that our concept of value has changed, and is no longer limited to the mere price we pay for a product or service. Specifically, value is now an idea consumers map onto our feelings regarding the perceived ethical behavior of a company's leadership. An overwhelming majority of consumers polled across the world — 82 percent — said they believe value now pertains to company transparency in regards to their products' manufacturing process and source of materials. The role of customer care also plays a noted role in shaping our views on value, especially for consumers in the US, Canada and the UK, who ranked this concept as one of the top three authenticity-signifying agents for more than 75 percent of industries.

F-H's Authenticity In An Uncertain World study, the fourth such annual report released by the Omnicom unit, analyzed companies' perceived authenticity across nine different "drivers" pertaining to society outcomes, management behaviors and customer benefits. The study was conducted by FleishmanHillard Global Intelligence in conjunction with independent research firm Lepere Analytics. Research came as a result of a comprehensive study of about 300 companies conducted with nearly 5,500 consumers across five countries. Research was gathered between March and April. ○

How does the public see CSR?

By Steve Barnes

The opinions that Americans have regarding which groups should shoulder the most environmental and social responsibility may be changing in the wake of the 2016 presidential election, according to a new study commissioned by G&S Business Communications.

The Sense & Sustainability® Study, which was conducted in August by YouGov Plc, surveyed 1,158 U.S. adults age 18 and over, focusing on public perceptions of corporate social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

A majority of people think that government has a large role to play in protecting the well-being of communities and the environment, the study found. While 48 percent of respondents said the government had a high degree of responsibility in that area when the survey was conducted in 2015, the number rose to 52 percent in 2017. That put the government on an equal footing with the general public, which also was judged to have a high level of social and environmental responsibility by 52 percent of the public in 2017, a drop from 55 percent in 2015.

While retailers were thought by respondents to have a lower degree of corporate social responsibility than the government or general public (37 percent in the 2017 study), they saw the biggest rise in that perception, up from 30 percent in 2015. Suppliers (up from 45 to 46 percent) and brands (up from 37 to 40 percent) also saw rises.

Sectors that saw the perception of their responsibility decrease included non-governmental organizations or "watchdog" groups (down from 50 to 43 percent) and religious groups (down from 30 to 35 percent).

When asked what attributes are most likely to contribute to a company's positive reputation, respondents put creating local jobs at the top of the list, with 57 percent saying it was important. Conserving natural resources (53 percent) and offering affordable goods or services (49 percent) were also thought to be significant.

What did not matter to them? Celebrities. Just two percent of respondents said that a company's having a celebrity spokesperson would raise their opinion of that company.

As regards who people trust to tell them about business efforts to promote sustainability, the mainstream news media still come out in the number-one spot, with 43 percent of respondents saying they rely on them. But the news media might want to put off any celebrating. That number is a 13 percent drop from the 57 percent it registered in the 2014 survey.

G&S also asked 482 U.S. personal investors for their perspectives on how various factors affect their evaluation of a company as an investment. They strongly valued such factors as strong customer relationships (81 percent), conducting business ethically (74 percent) and retention of top-performing employees (73 percent). ○

New rules for health product communications success

From research to the real world, launching a successful new medical product in today's market goes beyond message creation for the product itself.

By Kristie Kuhl and Arielle Bernstein Pinsof

Launching an innovative medical product into the marketplace is the moment of truth for so many: the R&D team that diligently pursued and perfected the science; the patients and families anxious for new treatment and new hope; the healthcare providers committed to bringing the best of medical innovation to people who can benefit.

For the communications team, it's a moment of truth as well: will the product's potential be understood and amplified by its key stakeholders, so that it reaches patients in need?

In today's marketplace, the answer to that question depends on so much more than clear messaging regarding the product itself. Communicators must also consider the messengers, the channels, and how to leverage previous scientific success in a way that sets the tone for commercial success.

A new playing field

It used to be that drug and medical device innovators were the dominant intellectual forces and leading voices in the product discussion. From news media to medical meetings, the experts who discovered and developed the product were the natural, sought-after sources of information, and communications teams readily managed the messaging. Now, innovators are a step removed: stakeholders seek details—and outside perspective—from advocates and KOLs, often before consulting company scientists.

Today's marketplace has turned product communications on its head in other ways, too. Media look at new medications as an expense ("how much will you charge?"), often forgetting the disease state has its own costs. The public is no longer willing to accept the story about a drug's intellectual property value and contribution to medicine as justification for a high price tag. Even when R&D breakthroughs have impressed and inspired during the lead-up to approval, once the drug is ready for launch, stakeholders want to see how that clinical success translates to real-world application.

Savvy PR professionals understand this new dynamic: the driving question for key audiences, even those who are enthusiastic about the product's potential, is "how do we know its true value?" The following three guideposts can help communicators demonstrate the patient need, the scientific proof points, and therefore, the unique value of the product.

1. First and foremost, remember the patient — don't treat medical innovation like a media stunt. We may be stating the obvious, but communicators must remember, and honor, the reason their product was developed in the first place: addressing an unmet patient need. Consider the multiple players who have rallied around this shared mission, and how they might discuss the product launch: How can chief scientists help to set the tone for the brand? How can KOLs who led peer-review trials be part of the conversation? How might patient groups express the distinct need of their community? Each of these voices will help to show how the new product fulfills genuine patient demand.

Making a splash is tempting (and in some ways important!), but it won't create lasting value. Recent years have seen examples of innovative medicines with high potential to address unmet needs — supported by high-visibility campaigns — whose science was exciting and meaningful, but whose market launch did not translate to physician and patient uptake. Celebrity campaigns can do wonders to raise awareness and educate the public, but increased understanding of a disease state doesn't necessarily tie to a single brand. Rather than creating gimmicks to get media attention, successful brands connect authentically with the people they intend to help, and position those allies alongside any high-profile efforts. After all, it's those voices that will help to build the case for product value and demand its availability; without the support of the patient community, even the most alluring celebrity advocates can't generate product use.

2. Understand the difference between breakthrough science and breakthrough product — and what is needed to bridge from one to the other. Today's health ecosystem draws a clear distinction between breakthrough science and breakthrough medicine. Increasingly, we see products that are lauded for their clinical innovation but nevertheless unable to gain a foothold in the market. While their contributions to our understanding of biology and medicine are tremendously important, sales won't follow unless their unique role in patient care is clear and understood.

If science represents excitement about the approach — the MOA, the molecule, the discovery — then medicine is the pragmatic application of that science to meet the needs of the patient community. Reporters

may be happy to write, with great enthusiasm, about breakthrough science before the product is reviewed and approved by regulatory bodies. But once that approval is achieved, the conversation turns from clinical understanding to population use.

When the discourse shifts from amazement about the science to the practicality of innovation in the patient community, PR teams must be well-prepared. Have you made clear that the benefit to the patient is not incremental, but rather matches the price and the amount of work required by patient and staff to properly utilize the medication? In many therapeutic categories now addressed by a pill or inhaler, biologics are being studied. In such cases, have you made the benefit clear enough to a patient and his or her doctor that they are willing to break an old habit and move to an injection, or will they think the pill is still "good enough"? Considering these questions ahead of time is critical to brand success.

3. Frame the discussion around value and access proactively. Lastly, understand that discussion in today's environment will always include cost and value — and, importantly, that access is the foundation to understanding and accepting both.

Although marketing and PR professionals often focus on product visibility when planning and deploying support for launch and approval, the dynamic has shifted. Patients, physicians, policymakers and payers are eager to assess new products through the lens of "value."

High visibility may garner positive metrics for news coverage and brand recognition, but it won't translate to product success unless access to therapy is addressed clearly. If patients cannot obtain the product, or physician offices are frustrated by paperwork and prior authorization obstacles to providing the product to patients, uptake will suffer.



Kristie Kuhl



Arielle Bernstein Pinsof

Continued on page 17



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Showing the ties between emotion and innovation

New pharmaceuticals are often promoted based on their realized traits — personal health benefits, requiring less frequency, the elimination of specific side effects — but few drug companies emphasize how innovation in Rx development can establish an emotional connection with their customers by leveraging how a drug can change people's behaviors or impact their lives beyond its mere tangible attribute.

By Srikant Ramaswami

The great Roger Ebert said it best. “Your intellect may be confused, but your emotions will never lie to you.”

No Gabriel Trumpet could have uttered a truer note, especially in an age where innovation often occurs through hard and not soft wiring of our brains. Why is emotion so important to building and marketing the next pioneering product?

There are many reasons why.

In a recent *Forbes* article, Ed Hess, Professor of Business Administration and Batten Executive-in-Residence at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business, wrote that leading research by cognitive, social, and positive psychologists has produced strong evidence that positive emotions enable and enhance cognitive processing, innovative thinking, creativity and lead to better judgments and decision making. Hess adds that research has also shown that negative emotions — especially fear and anxiety — have the opposite effect.

So how does this translate to the innovation process? For starters, it puts the focus squarely on identifying and satisfying consumer needs — in some cases needs they may not even be aware of — and driving the entire innovation development and communications process around that. American consumers are attracted to companies that focus on their specific needs — brands that “get” them. In fact, a majority of Americans (57 percent) are more likely to trust a company that consistently offers excellent customer service over one that consistently offers excellent prices (43 percent), according to an rbb Communications Breakout Brands Survey. The survey also reveals how emotional attachments between a company and the customer not only make them more eager to buy a product or service, but they are also willing to pay a lot more for it.

In my own experiences working in the pharmaceutical industry, I have found that there is often room for improvement in making the connection between emotion and innovation. The phrase “unmet need” is used frequently, however, much of the data surrounding why such products are needed rely more on clinicians and science, and not on a consumer's actual desires. Establishing strong and lasting bonds with patients, caregivers, physicians, and providers is critically important. By truly understanding

the behavior, buying habits, personal considerations, and emotional appeal of their products with the constituents whom they serve, lasting bonds can be created. Making products that truly make a difference can be hard work. But the investment to really understand what appeals to key audiences, and to communicate accordingly, can make a significant impact and enhance a company's reputation and overall success. Simply put, emotion sells.

When you take that into account when you innovate, the customer will thank you and your reputation will gain star status. Look at companies like Merck Serono*. They recently launched a new medicine called MAVENCLAD for multiple sclerosis in Europe. In seeking this approval, the company faced several obstacles. To begin, the medicine was not approved some years ago because there was concern about a potential side effect. Yet, Merck remained convinced that they were on the right track with an innovative medicine that would truly make a difference in the lives of patients who deserved better. They persevered, conducting rigorous studies to showcase how this first, only, short-course oral therapy provides four years of disease control with a maximum of 20 days of treatment. And they made the effort to translate these clinical and scientific advances into plain language that would resonate with MS patients and their families. Instead of touting clinical efficacies and scientific advances, the message stayed focused on patient needs: MAVENCLAD's key attributes meant time back and money saved for patients — time back to enjoy quality of life because of shorter treatment regimens, reduced monitoring requirements and most of all, the potential of extended periods free of disease symptoms. And money back as well — a consideration for payers and patients — because of the same product innovation attributes.

Other companies are also to be commended for their desire to establish a strong patient connection. Insights showed Johnson & Johnson that patients with schizophrenia often don't stick to their schedules for taking medication, so they invented medicines like INVEGA TRINZA that delivered the right amount of drug at fewer intervals so patients could have better compliance. J&J's head of neuroscience, Dr. Hussein Manji, is

a brilliant visionary who deeply cares about patients. He has helped countless families get the right psychiatrist to evaluate and treat their loved ones.

Sometimes it takes the right leadership to drive success. Anthera Pharmaceuticals*, a biopharmaceutical company focused on treatments for rare diseases, has very much focused its drug development efforts on the needs of its customers. For example, when initial clinical trials did not meet their primary endpoint in December 2016, newly appointed CEO Craig Thompson was motivated and used both emotion and innovation to inspire his team and investors to stay the course. This is because he believed in the efficacy of the product, and knew it was Anthera's responsibility to bring a sense of normalcy to these patients. More information about the results of this trial will be known in a few months.

Through feedback, data, insights, and passion, researchers have answered the call for patients in many disease areas. In the early 1980s an HIV diagnosis meant getting your affairs in order, and the same can be said for Hepatitis C, once considered incurable. Thanks to a number of strong advocacy groups who humanized the disease, and used emotion to successfully lobby the government and pharmaceutical companies, we have treatments and cures for these patients to live longer, healthier lives. In an age where clairvoyance is heresy, I believe that diabetes will be cured within a decade because our understanding of the disease and what patients want is so clearly understood.

Patients want medicines to give them their lives back. They aspire and dream like everyone else. They want to hold their grandchildren; stay active and independent; We're in the business of improving lives, not just talking about advances in medical science. So why not spend more time gaining insights that can help truly develop and distribute medicines that patients need?

For PR practitioners, in healthcare and elsewhere, to be successful and to represent



Srikant Ramaswami

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Key elements of engaging healthcare employees

Current labor trends provide some keen insight into why healthcare employees aren't engaged, and what internal communications and HR leaders can do to recruit, retain and engage top talent.

By Cynthia Isaac

The pace of business today is faster than ever before. Connecting employees from different geographies and cultures, providing 24/7 anywhere/anytime access to information, and automating tasks formerly performed by people has become the “new normal.” Adding to the complexity is four generations of employees—Boomers, GenX, Millennials, and GenZ—converging in the workforce, each bringing with it diverse workstyles and differing expectations of employers. Across every industry, no issue is more integral to success than maintaining the highest levels of employee engagement and the retention of top talent.

Savvy leaders in human resources and internal communications functions have always understood that internal communications and employee engagement are critical business imperatives. A recent Towers Watson Change and Communication ROI Study indicates that internal communications is a leading indicator of financial performance, revealing that firms ranked as highly effective communicators earned 47 percent higher returns across five years compared to firms that were ranked the least effective communicators.

Despite their importance, engagement and retention remain top challenges for business leaders in healthcare. The 2017 ProClinical Employee Engagement Life Sciences Benchmark Report reveals a drop from 67 percent in 2016 to 63 percent in 2017, while commitment to remain with their employer for the long term has dropped from 60 percent in 2016 to just 47 percent in 2017. Similarly, our team works with several large pharmaceutical companies employing sizeable outsourced field forces to combat high turnover rates and low engagement.

Why is employee engagement such a challenge? We believe three core trends are having a global impact:

First, trust in large businesses is declining, with only 18 percent of Americans reporting “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in big business, with similar declines worldwide. When asked about healthcare, only nine percent of Americans surveyed believed that companies put patients over profits. Is it any surprise that employees in an industry eyed with suspicion and who don't believe that their values are aligned with those of their employer aren't willing

to go the extra mile to create value for their company?

Second, many companies are moving toward an “outsourced” and highly distributed business model: lean and flexible core teams supplemented with specific expertise from consultants and freelancers as needed, allowing companies to rapidly adapt to changing customer needs. It appears that the workers who desire the more “traditional” path are becoming fewer in number as perks like greater flexibility in schedule and more control over their work environment increase in importance. While today 34 percent of the total US workforce is made up of freelancers, 41 percent of full-time employees indicate they expect to become independent workers in the next year, and 53 percent—more than half—anticipate becoming independent workers within the next five years. This is truly a new workforce, and one that brings different expectations about their relationship with their employers to the job, along with a strong desire for relationships and collaboration. As a result, companies must find new ways to build strong connections to the company, its culture, leadership and mission if they are to capture the innovations these consultants can bring to the enterprise.

Third, the demographics of the workforce are undergoing a seismic change. As 3.6 million Baby Boomers retire, one-fourth of Millennial workers will take on management roles as an increasing percentage of Generation Z enters the workforce. With this shift in demographics (which amplifies the cultural differences brought forward by globalization), comes expectations about employee experience in the workplace. Despite the trend toward a distributed workforce, a 2017 Future Workplace survey showed that Millennials and Generation Z desire collaboration and in-person communication, with 56 percent answering “the people I work with” when asked to name the top attribute that enables them to do their best work. Viewed through the lens of this relationship-centered environment, reports that Millennial managers feel ill-prepared to lead are alarming—29 percent report their education has not prepared them to resolve conflicts, 28 percent report lacking negotiating skills and 27 percent say they do not know how to manage people.

The challenges are clear, so what should HR leaders and internal communications

leaders think about in the context of these trends?

Defining a shared purpose. The purpose of a company defines why a company exists, and how it addresses larger forces at work in society and the broader economy. Most employees want to feel that they are working for a greater good, and with many agreeing that a shared purpose is more important than a paycheck. Instilling a sense of shared purpose through the company's narrative, communications and actions can attract and energize not only the right employees, but also a company's customers, partners and vendors.



Cynthia Isaac

Building trust. The rumor mill is damaging in any company, but particularly in one with a highly-distributed workforce. Building trust requires a two-pronged approach that provides continuous and consistent communication. Leadership communications must continually reinforce how the current business strategy supports the company's shared purpose and values, and must be as transparent as possible regarding the company's business, success and future plans, even when the news is not good. At the same time, managers must communicate consistently with their teams so all employees understand the role they play in achieving the company's goals. Equally important is offering regular opportunities to provide feedback, so emerging issues can be identified, and meaningful solutions that will strengthen trust are offered.

Shaping culture. Companies can define their culture on paper, but engaging employees to take ownership of the company's culture requires modeling real-life examples of culture in action. To accomplish this goal, HR and internal communications executives must consider aligning both learning and development and rewards and recognition programs to reinforce core behaviors. A recent Harvard Business Publishing State of Leadership Development Survey of learning and development professionals and business managers from large enterprises showed that only 19 percent of business managers strongly

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Inspiring and motivating the empowered patient

As the healthcare industry undergoes a radical digital transformation driven by the self-service model occurring between patients and employers, payers, and providers, healthcare brands have an opportunity to tap into the power of storytelling to inspire, build trust and truly impact change both in the industry and for their organizations.

By Dan Martin

One thing is certain in today's unpredictable communications landscape: marketers are now more accountable for revenue than ever before, and it's essential to drive true, meaningful engagement that ultimately leads people to take action.

When it comes to the healthcare industry, this means marketing is staring out at the next frontier. Until recently, it was acceptable to provide consumers with information several times per year — send an email about the upcoming benefits enrollment, or touch base on their birthday wishing them a healthy year ahead — then check a box off the list and move on to other priorities. However, there are influences afoot creating monumental shifts in the way brands need to approach and engage their audiences, including current policy in place and looming potential changes; consumers' willingness to adopt new advances in technology innovation; changing business models across all key players, including payers, providers and vendors; and patients who are now taking a self-service approach to their healthcare.

No longer is it acceptable to simply guide a buyer through the sales funnel and sporadically nurture the relationship.

Thanks to the digital revolution taking hold in all aspects of life—rapid e-commerce, online banking and online education, just to name a few—people have grown accustomed to getting everything quickly, wherever they are, whenever they want and via any device of their choosing. This same expectation now applies to healthcare. Consumers now have the awareness, technology and access to resources that influence their decisions more than ever before. In today's healthcare marketing landscape, it is imperative that brands provide consumers with memorable experiences that inform and excite, are highly relevant and personalized, and foster an emotional connection.

With advances in technology, such as inbound and sales enablement platforms and analytics, it is now possible for marketers to better personalize, engage, measure and refine their approach to resonate with target audiences. While technology is a great place to start, it alone is not enough to drive true behavior change and spur a desired action. Success is guided by two critical factors: storytelling and relevance. Healthcare brands need to engage their audiences with unique, interesting stories they can relate to.

It's not an earth-shattering insight that

business and life are about personal, human relationships and that people buy from people and companies that they know, trust and with whom they share a common connection. In today's world of healthcare marketing it's even more critical — remember, we're talking about a topic that is highly personal and deals directly with individual preferences, values and interests. So, why then do so many healthcare marketing and business leaders still fall into the trap of lazy marketing tactics? They claim they want to connect with consumers as real human beings, yet their priorities, actions and language are oftentimes doing just the opposite and, as a result, getting lost in a sea of sameness and uninspired corporate speak.

Healthcare brands can and should tap into the power of storytelling to inspire, build trust and serve consumers. We're not talking about constant self-promotion of the latest platform or industry-speak about hard-to-grasp concepts or trends — real people don't care about that and don't comprehend most of the jargon.

In fact, statistics abound demonstrating that millions of Americans lack confidence in understanding their insurance policy, the ACA and its proposed changes, basic insurance terminology, and additional benefit options such as HSAs and FSAs. Both consumers and businesses want to know, in layman's terms, how your offering provides a benefit to them. Can they more easily order prescription medication? Make a doctor's appointment? View the balance of their FSA? Manage their employee benefits program and connect data from various sources? They also need to understand how others are using your offering to drive positive change.

Whatever the size of your company and category you fit within—whether it be healthcare IT, digital health, pharma or medical devices—storytelling requires a solid brand architecture and message foundation, as well as deep knowledge of your audience and competitors. Knowing what you are, what you do, who you do it for and how you do it differently enables you to clearly articulate a story that will be unique, relevant and, ultimately, resonate with consumers. With a solid story in place, marketers have an overarching architecture that communicates the company's mission and vision as well as its relevance to the larger market landscape.

The key factor is ensuring that your story, content and distribution channels are relevant to your target audiences. As mentioned above, people and companies are interested in how you provide value to them. Therefore, what you're saying and what you're offering must be meaningful and give them a reason to engage with your brand.

For example, if you're selling a health plan, each member of your covered population is different and at a different stage in their healthcare journey. There are gender, age, financial and geographical considerations to take into account. There are also varying lifestyle factors to consider: some people run marathons, others have chronic conditions and others lead more sedentary lives. You need to be able to stratify your population and provide each of these individuals with information, resources, reminders, etc. that pertain specifically to them. A 35-year-old male is not going to respond to a women's health campaign, any more than an 18-year-old female will respond to a campaign focused on prostate cancer. Utilizing your overarching brand position and messaging, you must tailor campaigns to specific audiences — allowing for consistency, yet specificity. To do so, marketers can employ several strategies, including creating personas and conducting primary research.

When creating your story and laying out your brand position and messaging, target audiences should be addressed by role, needs, and buying behavior. However, many modern marketers are taking it to a deeper level with "persona marketing," whereby representative versions of prospects and customers are created containing in-depth, lifelike characteristics that inform content development.

As you start to think about the personas that best align to your company and products, a few questions to consider include:

- Demographics. Where do they live, what is their gender, education and income level?
- Lifestyle. What are their interests, and what do they like to do in their free time?
- Who influences their product choices?



Dan Martin

— Continued on next page

THE EMPOWERED PATIENT

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- What are their personal goals?
- Why would they choose to interact with your company, or your competitors? What do they want from your company?
- Where do they look for information about your company or products? What type of information are they seeking?

Giving consideration to these questions should provide you with the groundwork from which to build your approach to reaching and engaging your target audiences. Persona marketing isn't one size fits all. Marketers need to spend the time to truly know and understand the details of what makes their audiences tick.

Primary and secondary research can also be a useful guide as you seek to make your brand story relevant — and it can also play an instrumental role in creating your personas. Spend time surveying key audiences to understand what matters to them, what

EMOTION AND INNOVATION

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the best interests of their clients and society, it is imperative to truly “pull back the hood” and understand the emotional drivers that dictate the demand for innovative products and services. Only then can the informative process of what is truly revolutionary take center stage and introduce a brand-new world of sensational products with inelastic demand, representing the choices, dreams, and preferences of the customer.

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*Merck Serono and Anthera Pharmaceuticals are clients of rbb Communications.

NEW RULES FOR HEALTH PRODUCTS

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Launching in today's market is complex, but success is possible with the help of thoughtful, savvy communicators. If the PR team can keep conversation centered on the unmet patient need — not merely product attributes — and, ultimately, demonstrate how and why the brand is central to the dialogue between patient, physician and payer, then success will follow.

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challenges they face, what they need to reach their goals, and where and how they get their information. Look at online communities, media outlets, tradeshow and events. Doing both of these will help give you a pulse on your audience. Don't leave it to guesswork.

Additionally, when talking about relevance, it needs to extend beyond just your story and your brand identity. It is crucial to understand how your target audience wants to receive information. What are the most relevant channels for your audience? For example, certain generations are inclined to do everything via their mobile phones, whereas others might prefer traditional

EMERGING HEALTHCARE EMPLOYEES

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agree that their leadership development programs have a strong correlation to the business issues their company culture is designed to address. Taking a fresh look at these programs and ensuring they are in line with the company's current direction and focus should not be a rare endeavor, but an ongoing evaluation. In addition, programs that reward positive behavior — and ideally allow for both peer-to-peer and manager-to-employee recognition — bring

mail. You'll never drive people to action if you're not reaching them in a way that is relevant to their lifestyle.

As you forge ahead into this new generation of healthcare marketing, be mindful that your story be unique and compelling, and that your messaging support your overall brand identity — now and into the future. Otherwise, you'll see more of the same and be stuck in the past with irrelevant content, an outdated view of your audience, and a patchwork of strategies and tactics that leave you wondering why you're not seeing results.

Dan Martin is Vice President at PAN Communications. ○

culture to life in a way that creates stronger bonds between teams.

Managing the transformation of the global workforce is certainly fraught with challenges. Human resources and internal communications leaders are in a position to provide the competitive advantage to their companies in the race to recruit, retain and engage talent by empowering a workforce aligned in objectives, values and purpose.

Cynthia Isaac, Ph.D, leads the Corporate Communications practice for the public relations group of INC Research/inVentiv Health. ○

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Do you speak science? Here's why you should

As health and medicine collide with science and technology, thoughtful communication is mission critical to keep messaging on point and on brand.

By Erik Clausen

Healthcare has experienced a self-re-discovery. Tools and technologies that were first designed for scientific research have found their way into the clinic, and patients and providers both increasingly turn to the data these provide for insights that guide patient care. Genomic testing steers cancer treatment, wearable and implantable devices wirelessly log and share biometrics, and this year researchers successfully tested gene editing on a human embryo for the first time.

As the worlds of healthcare and life science collide, organizations need communications strategies that speak comfortably to both — that help them evolve with the market landscape and position themselves appropriately in the integrated, science-based medical environment now arriving. We must dive deep into the science behind their brands and learn how to articulate it to stakeholders — from those paying for research to those performing it to those benefiting from the treatments and innovations it produces.

Monolingual messaging that glosses over new developments will lead to a different discovery: that audiences — ever bold and curious — have an almost entrepreneurial drive to leap to conclusions. Bake in a news cycle that's often a few hours at most, giving audiences a very limited window to form a complete opinion, and the phenomenon becomes unavoidable. When we fail to communicate clearly about scientific advances in healthcare, audiences inevitably draw their own conclusions.

Don't leave your message to the masses

An excellent case study comes from San Diego-based Organovo. The biotechnology company 3D-prints human tissue as a study tool for researchers and for some therapeutic applications, including as graft material to patch an ailing organ. It's a fascinating, compelling technology, to be sure. But when media and the public first caught wind of it, they latched onto a misconception that the company was on the cusp of printing entire organs and eliminating transplant waiting lists.

We hope they do someday. But it's going to take quite a while for the technology and science to progress, and for the healthcare system to adapt, before that outcome is a possibility. In the first six months after its IPO, Organovo's stock price fluctuated wildly, leaping 750 percent then diving back

down to Earth as investors see-sawed between dreams and reality. The lesson: When science gets dumbed down, messaging gets lost — and that has real, bottom-line consequences.

This is an ever-present risk in medicine because science-based healthcare is a new and rapidly changing development. In the new, data-driven medical environment, patients and doctors alike regularly encounter new ideas, treatments, and technologies, and they rarely have sufficient background knowledge to distinguish science from science fiction. Translational science can be an especially difficult conversation for lay audiences to jump into.

Audiences can, however, make smart decisions about complex topics if they're given enough information through clear, on-point messaging. And that's precisely where we come in as professional communicators.

Human stories are a common tongue

The upside of the transformation in healthcare is that science communication has been getting a lot more exciting. With all due respect to those who serve in basic research, life science and biotechnology companies get to deal with better stories. No longer dealing with the theoretical and the abstract, they're able to talk about how tools or technologies directly affect the outcome of somebody dealing with a medical condition.

Those are powerful stories, and they aren't all just about survival. In some cases, the story is about quality of life, or extending life, and it's about people that may not have had that opportunity five or 10 years ago.

Bio-Rad Laboratories is in the thick of crossing over a technology to clinical practice — a research tool that in simplest terms counts DNA. Bio-Rad's is not the only technology that does this, but it is especially good at doing it quickly. Researchers found a use for the instrument in pathology labs to identify specific tumor mutations that oncologists can treat with targeted medications.

Bio-Rad's marketing campaign translates counting DNA into measuring moments. It emphasizes the speed of the technology and the impact it has on patients and doctors when genomic information is quickly available.

In a case like this, a human story acts as a bridge to the science. The more human, the more we can relate. The more we can relate,

the more likely we are to understand the underlying science.

Finding bilingual balance

The trick is to balance those human stories, typically a long-term endeavor to develop, with short-term business priorities — the next fundraising opportunity, raising visibility for partnerships, managing milestones for a clinical development program, etc. Organovo righted its PR difficulties and lifted its brand by focusing on the short-term. The company found and declared its commercial path. It now positions itself as changing the shape of medical research and practice by accelerating discovery and lowering the cost of research. Though misconceptions unavoidably bubble up from time to time, that messaging has helped all stakeholders move together toward their common, closer-term goals.

Further solutions can be adapted from other industries. We see issues of managing hype around autonomous vehicles. The technology is available and in pilot, so the hype cycle immediately leaps over the major cultural, behavioral, infrastructure, and financial changes that would have to occur to introduce the technology at a consumer level.

In this case, misconception has proven to be an asset. Self-driving cars are far from mainstream, but Tesla, Google, Toyota and other car manufacturers have absorbed the public's high expectations to fuel their development.

Every company's individual situation is different, of course, but we are united by a reality that the confluence of science and healthcare is accelerating, and healthcare technology will continue to advance at an exponential rate. At the start of the millennium, transcribing a human's complete genome cost an estimated \$100 million. Now it can be done for about \$1,000. Sequencing giant Illumina has plans to drive that down to \$100, which would make the service accessible to virtually everyone.

As health and science communicators, we don't know exactly where this shift in medicine will lead us. But we can appreciate our own responsibility to speak to both sides of this converging spectrum in ways that everyone with a stake in a technology's future will understand.

Erik Clausen is Managing Partner at CG Life. ○



Erik Clausen



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Reputation management is more than crisis control

Ongoing, proactive reputation management strategies healthcare organizations should keep in mind before a crisis looms.

By Chowning Johnson and Maria Recupero

A healthcare organization's reputation is essential to its success — and survival. Although reputation is considered an intangible asset, it does drive tangible benefits for the organization through consumer and investor confidence and support. And there's good reason: A hospital's reputation and perception is associated with better care quality and outcomes. In the fiercely competitive healthcare market and dynamic social environment, where perception can change in an instant, reputation is not only foundational to success but something to be constantly managed.

Recently, the importance of reputation has been prominent in global news and social media across various industries. Companies such as United, Chipotle, Uber, Wells Fargo, Volkswagen and many others have had to navigate crisis strategies and responses to maintain their reputation and standing in their respective markets, as well as in minds of consumers.

Too often, however, people intrinsically connect reputation management with such crises. A shift needs to occur. With the 24/7 news cycle and millions of engaged consumers online, it's no longer sufficient to view reputation management as crisis control. Rather, reputation management is proactive and ongoing communications that happens before a crisis is even on the horizon.

Much more is at stake than rapid crisis recovery. Maintaining a strong corporate reputation in the healthcare industry is a competitive advantage that drives brand recognition, patient acquisition, revenue and standing in the market. The same way an organization must continuously develop, improve and strengthen its service lines and business strategy, it must do likewise to its reputation.

Similar to businesses in other industries, healthcare organizations should consider the following reputation management strategies:

Know your organization, inside and out

So what does proactive and effective reputation management look like? The foundation is trust, which comes from authentic and relevant communications that foster engagement and build meaningful relationships.

Such a strategy begins by a careful internal and external examination. Organizations must first understand their brand's goals, mission and vision. Then, compare

how the internal perception of your brand aligns with the external one target audiences have. If there's a disconnect or any uncertainty surrounding these key elements of your brand's ethos, then customers will have doubts as well. The next phase is to assess the brand's environment through research. What are the key challenges and opportunities in your industry as it relates to reputation? Where do competitors stand? Most importantly, who is your audience, both on- and offline?

Meal-kit service Blue Apron can answer that last question. The company surveys customers at each step of the way, especially if they suspend or close their account. The survey begins at a high-level, asking about customers' demographics and cooking habits, but then becomes granular to learn about customers' perceptions of food and service quality, environmental concerns and Blue Apron's competitors. Through these surveys, Blue Apron learns much more than why this customer was dissatisfied. Rather, they gather meaningful insight into the company's reputation—data that will pay dividends later on.

Engage audiences in meaningful ways

Informed by research, healthcare organizations should develop a proactive reputation and communication strategy. This strategy must include a way to continuously reach your audience by providing relevant information at every stage of the patient journey, whether that may include sending service line updates, relevant content and surveys about their experience. The relationship before and after a visit should continue to be nurtured, leading to increased brand awareness, a better understanding of your audience and a better overall customer experience.

JetBlue is a company that understands this dynamic. The air carrier researched its audience to determine that they are interested in affordable travel, but also crave comfort and convenience. They also learned that its younger audience is comfortable communicating through social media channels and demonstrated that understanding by emphasizing their Twitter account, @JetBlueCheers, where they interact with users, resolve concerns and share promotions.

This reflects one of the core tenets of engaging with an audience: accessibility. JetBlue is resting its reputation on their availability to their audience, opening dialogues

and continually learning about their needs and expectations.

Another core tenet of a reputation-building communication strategy is to share progress. Consumers need to be reminded that a healthcare organization's services continue to improve and are addressing their current needs while anticipating potential challenges, instead of reacting to market changes.

Lastly, and perhaps the most important element of communication, is openness and transparency. JetBlue has had its share of incidents that could reflect poorly on its industry-leading reputation, but has responded in an honest, humble and straightforward way that helped it weather the repercussions.

Share good stories

Through consumer engagement and interactions, healthcare organizations need to take the opportunity to tell success stories and build a positive perception of the brand. These substantive stories, however, should build on what has already been accomplished and translate to consumers in way that is relevant, distinctive, and above all, true and verifiable.

Besides these positive, action-oriented stories, forging meaningful relationships with key stakeholders can be leveraged to the organization's benefit. Developing and maintaining key relationships with satisfied patients or influencers is critical to help build, or rebuild, ongoing trust and credibility.

This is accomplished by asking patients to share their experience — and amplifying their voices. Activated third-party champions for the organization are effectively transformed into a stable of relevant and credible third-party ambassadors to amplify and reinforce the organization's messaging and success stories.

Atlanta's Grady Memorial Hospital's "I wouldn't be here without Grady" campaign is a good example of this strategy. The video and print campaign featured patients sharing their experiences of how the hospital saved their lives. One of these print profiles featured an actor from the hit TV show, "The Walking Dead," which included



Chowning Johnson



Maria Recupero

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Pharma needs to fearlessly innovate in social media

The pharmaceutical industry has been slow to adopt social media campaigns into their media mix, but it's time for this sector to finally recognize the innovative opportunities these platforms provide for educating and empowering patients in new ways.

By Peter Vigliarolo

There's something the pharmaceutical industry can learn from this past year's Presidential election: social media counts. It's no secret that the pharma industry is risk-averse. However, it's time for a change. As management guru W. Edwards Deming reminds us, "Change is not required. Survival is not mandatory."

Peter Pitts, President and Co-Founder of the Center for Medicine in the Public Interest and Former FDA Associate Commissioner for External Relations said, "Social media just keeps on rolling along. And regulated industry just keeps falling further and further behind the curve."

Don't misunderstand the FDA

To understand why pharmaceutical companies have been slow to integrate social media into their media mix, it's helpful to consider the perception of an indistinct regulatory landscape they must put aside. The good news is that the FDA offers specific guidance for pharma companies to participate in social media in a regulatory-compliant manner.

It's not easy, but it is possible. And the benefits certainly outweigh the risks.

The FDA writes:

If a firm voluntarily corrects misinformation in a truthful and non-misleading manner and as described in this draft guidance, FDA does not intend to object if the corrective information voluntarily provided by the firm does not satisfy otherwise applicable regulatory requirements regarding labeling or advertising, if any.

To many in pharmaceutical company marketing and regulatory review departments, it may seem a distinction without a difference. But that's a fundamental misunderstanding of the FDA's mindset when it comes to social media. For example, in September 2008, the FDA sent out a warning letter regarding a YouTube video in which a paid celebrity spokesperson said that a drug had "cured" his disease (a decidedly off-label claim, shades of Dorothy Hamill and Vioxx).

And many internal reviewers industry-wide said, "See, you can't use YouTube."

Not so. It wasn't about YouTube. If the content is non-compliant, then it is non-compliant, regardless of platform. As far as the FDA is concerned, platforms are agnostic. It's the content that counts.

In March 2013, there was much angst

over the FDA's Warning Letter to AMARC Enterprises because of their Poly Mva Facebook page. Some concluded that this meant pharma shouldn't be on Facebook. But the gist of that letter was that the company is marketing its veterinary dietary supplement as a human oncology drug.

In the letter, the Office of Prescription Drug Promotion spends a lot of time addressing the violative claims made on the company's website and then—at the very bottom of the letter—addresses the issue of Facebook. The OPDP writes: We also note that your Facebook account includes a post, which was "liked" by "Poly Mva":

"Poly MVA has done wonders for me. I take it intravenously 2x a week and it has helped me tremendously. It enabled me to keep cancer at bay without the use of chemo and radiation ... Thank you AMARC."

That's a violative statement on any media platform. It just happened to take place on Facebook. "Liking" a violative third-party statement from your own Facebook account is violative behavior. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure that one out.

As long as pharma companies communicate with honesty and integrity, they will be just fine on social media, which should be music to their ears, because the platform provides them an opportunity to innovate and reach customers in new ways.

Courage + conviction = content, creativity

For pharma industry social media pioneers, the payoff has been big. For example, Pfizer leveraged the power of community to create the platform Get Old, which centers around the fear of aging as well as wellness, disease prevention and treatment. The campaign fosters online discussion through content, forums and social media posts. The goals for pharma companies in campaigns like this are much bigger than an increase in product sales. It's about shifting attitudes of not only their own companies, but becoming the hub of information for large populations of people.

The results have shown this to be true: several years later a poll conducted on behalf of Pfizer reported that the Get Old campaign produced a 45 to 55 percent uptick in how consumers felt about Pfizer's reputation as a trustworthy company and also attributed to employee recruitment and retention goals.

Unbranded content communities can bring people together through powerful storytelling that isn't possible with traditional

marketing communications. AbbVie created StoryLab, which features researched, strategic articles that bring AbbVie to life through unbranded, engaging stories that matter to their key stakeholders.

To get their big idea off the ground, AbbVie created a focused content team that creates, develops, distributes and measures a wealth of stories and information across social platforms. It's also worth noting their owned content also is often distributed and pitched to traditional media outlets, which truly makes StoryLab an efficient and integrated strategy—two keys to success.

One way to begin this new approach to content development is by creating a platform that focuses on the areas where your products specialize. This means shifting away from product-specific marketing to disease education and prevention information that helps audiences connect with one another. The most effective unbranded social media efforts evoke emotions and encourage experiences.

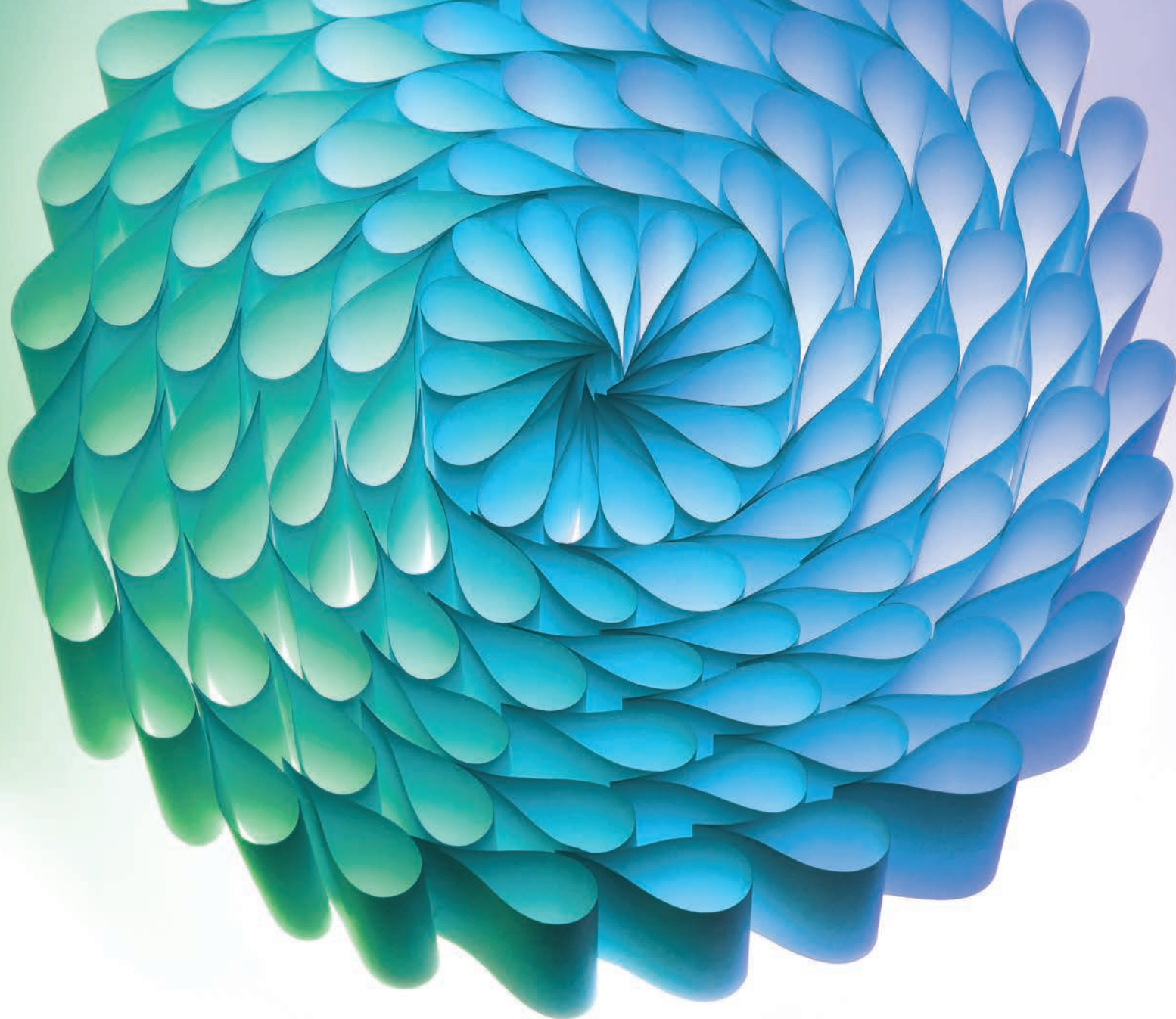
Not only will connective social campaigns elevate pharma companies to becoming educators and leaders in health, but they will also empower patients to become energized brand ambassadors. While pharma companies have been slower to dive into the innovative opportunities within digital campaigns, populations will continue to seek meaningful ways to connect with the companies that help improve their health and their lives.

It's time for pharma to get over any remaining fears of social media, or mistakenly point to regulatory as a crutch. And companies shouldn't just "keep the lights on" or "do it because we need a Facebook page." They should dive headfirst into smart, engaging campaigns that create a platform around the needs of the customer. The industry's hesitance means there is opportunity — right now — to win the communications in this space. If you keep waiting around, someone is going to beat you to it.

Peter Vigliarolo is a Vice President of Paddilla's healthcare marketing practice and has more than 25 years of experience in pharma and medical communications. ○



Peter Vigliarolo



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Coordinating messages when companies join forces

As Pharma, biotech and health technology companies partner, the practice of integrated communications and coordinating messaging among and between all parties involved takes on mission critical importance.

By Donna LaVoie

Life science companies, including big and small pharma, biotech and health technology, continue the trend toward partnerships to research, develop and/or commercialize their innovations, allowing companies to enter new markets, continue niche disease research and development and introduce innovations sooner. Adding to the mix are accelerators and venture firms launching new companies into the health science and technology ecosystem.

Even though they are joining forces, and likely have the same end-goal, each of these companies will have a unique, and sometimes competing, set of communications and business goals. They also may have different priorities on stakeholder mix. While it's easy to default to the needs of the larger company, strategic communications entails finding ways to balance the needs of all parties in the transaction.

It makes perfect sense that "big pharma" and accelerator companies look to acquire potential commercially viable assets that can shave years off of their R&D efforts, and that biotech startups will look to these larger corporations to gain regulatory and marketing expertise along with the financial stability to keep pushing their assets forward, but the communications goals of the companies in dramatically different stages of their life cycles will vary greatly.

This atmosphere provides challenges for many organizations if they have not integrated their communications efforts across the various marketing and communications disciplines. It is incumbent on the strategic communications function and agency partner to help both the large and small company identify stakeholder priorities and balance their communications needs to ensure maximization of their IR, PR, social media and digital communications opportunities.

A solid communications strategy before, during and after a licensing transaction, accelerator or new company launch conveys a strong, clear and consistent message to both companies' stakeholders, and also paves the way for patients, advocacy groups, partners, media and investors to learn more.

Here's a recent example:

The situation

A relatively young life sciences accelerator operating company focused on development of pharmaceuticals and other technologies is preparing to support the operations

and Series A launch of its first new company. The "newco" is an emerging biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing first-in-class oral therapeutics for patients with autoimmune diseases, and has a lead asset which has shown promise for the treatment of autoimmune diseases by engaging a unique mechanism of action.

Leaders at the accelerator company and the biopharmaceutical company recognize the potential of the asset, but have different goals for the public launch of the newco. The accelerator company, led by a well-known industry veteran, wishes to use the launch to strengthen its reputation and attract additional financing and drug development partners. On the other hand, the CEO of the emerging biopharmaceutical company wants the public launch to shine the light on the research, the next steps for the asset, and the future of the company in the hopes of attracting additional financing.

How does a strategic communications plan promote the accelerator company, and also ensure the emerging company receives the kind of coverage it wants — despite two different storylines?

The solution

First and foremost, it takes an experienced team of communicators that not only understand the needs of emerging biotech companies, but can pull from perspectives of other types of organizations — both mid to larger as well as venture and philanthropically focused. Providing possible solutions to problems helps to bridge the communications gap between the two companies.

In this case, the best method to ensure both parties' buy-in was a two-pronged pitch and social media approach that allowed the accelerator's leadership to garner the national industry recognition it deserved, while directing the biopharmaceutical's story to vertical trade publications and patient advocacy groups that would be more apt to write about the science. While both the accelerator's and newco's key messages were pulled through each other's storylines to ensure a wide swath of coverage, the primary focus for each remained on the topics that mattered most to them. It sounds so simple, but getting both companies comfortable with that approach took a deft negotiating hand.

These skills, the experience to navigate through the often-bumpy currents of part-

nership communications, and the integration of the various disciplines, are important to the ultimate success of any partnership. Excellent negotiation skills and good communication, as well as relationships with other key functional areas, are essential to producing successful outcomes.

Ultimately, for this process to work, there must be up-front alignment with each company's key stakeholders on the overall communications approach, an agreement on potential news flow and milestones, and a clear picture of what a successful communications plan looks like.



Donna LaVoie

An effective communications strategy goes a long way toward helping organizations control their messages, and avoid misunderstandings during the acquisition or launch process. The following are a few key issues to consider when communicating an acquisition, in-licensing, or company launch:

Audience identification: Ensure that both companies clearly establish the key stakeholders for their news. Depending on the situation, these audiences may include: investors, business partners, the medical community, patient advocacy groups, community leaders and elected officials, as well as print/broadcast/digital media outlets — and maybe even consumers.

Consistent messaging: While the key messages should be uniquely tailored to each company's audience, these messages must be determined up-front and in conjunction with both parties, to ensure there are no surprises in how each is represented to various stakeholder audiences.

Internal communications: Getting out ahead of the internal communications necessary to promote a launch or licensing is key. Developing templates for communications to investors, shareholders and partners explaining the expectations and timelines goes a long way toward ensuring a smooth liftoff.

External/social media communications: Develop specialized press releases and pitches that meet the key needs of both parties whenever possible. These releases and pitches should be tailorable to the varying kinds of media outlets each company seeks to attract. Develop and gain approval for the key external messages, so that each company is "speaking the same language."

Continued on page 28



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Thriving in an uncertain healthcare environment

The unpredictable policy seesaw we are experiencing with the new Administration and Congress appears to be having a tangible impact on the lives of healthcare communications professionals, and not just those focused on policy.

By Sharon M. Reis and Tamara P. Moore

While significant legislative battles are being fought, healthcare organizations are preparing to adapt to a new way of life, and it isn't clear what that will look like. As a result, new positioning, messages, and many outreach activities have been reconfigured to meet the new demands of a volatile, ever-changing healthcare environment. The examples below demonstrate how this movement is affecting the demands made on communications professionals.

- One nonprofit undertook an extensive rebranding process and created new positioning and messaging. They reoriented the entire organization to be ready to lead in an entirely new era of health and healthcare.

- A medical society is trying to make sure it has a seat at the table and is regarded as a critical member of the care team, as clinics, hospitals, and technology combine to alter care-delivery to meet the needs of their patients, whenever and wherever they want and need care.

- CEOs are being challenged by their boards to become a national voice for their organization. They are engaging more in thought-leadership activities and speaking up on policy matters.

- A professional association is making sure the C-suites of hospitals and health systems recognize and value their role in improving care and reducing costs. Otherwise, they face being replaced with a perceived lower-cost alternative or having those services eliminated altogether.

We've seen the focus of communications activities evolve to meet the new demands of the healthcare marketplace. It's certainly an exciting time, and one that requires PR professionals to take a candid look at the role they play within their organization and make sure they are ready to meet the communications demands of a new healthcare world.

Taking the pulse of PR professionals

To learn more about how the changing environment is affecting workloads and to understand how communications experts are preparing for 2018, we surveyed members of the Public Relations Society of America, and are eager to share what we found.

2017 has emerged as the year when more communications professionals are being asked to do more. More than one-third of

PR professionals report an increased workload and approximately one in 10 say their workload is in a constant state of change because of the political environment. No one said their workload has decreased.

Many are being asked to provide ROI projections to justify the investment of time and resources by leadership and subject-matter experts. These findings lead one to believe our jobs are becoming more challenging and not necessarily more appreciated. One survey respondent worries about "diluting the definition and value of PR as a strategic process to influence specific people ..." Another said, "We increasingly have to be our own reporters in a noisy world." Another said the "perception of PR being free and easy" makes it difficult to do our jobs.

The current environment is affecting how PR people expect to spend their time in 2018. Social media, messaging, and issues management are the top three growth areas, followed by thought-leadership, consumer education, and research. The power of social media is growing and the demand for clear, concise, and targeted messaging has never been greater. Limited time and the barrage of competing information sources are forcing our industry to spend more time using fewer words, for a highly segmented audience.

Time spent on earned media, advocacy, and branding are expected to decline in the coming year. This was surprising and brings into question if the growing competition for share of voice in the media and among policymakers is partly to blame. It's becoming increasingly challenging to stand out in the always-on news cycle and amidst the gridlock of legislation.

PR people are worried about the economy, and for varying reasons. One person alluded to the surge economy driving up demand for PR services. Others voiced concerns about a possible looming recession and the reduction of federal monies that fund healthcare campaigns and their communications budgets.

Many of these changes are to be expected, and being asked to do more with fewer resources isn't a new challenge for our field. However, what we are tasked to do on a day-to-day basis is changing. It has become increasingly challenging to place earned media stories. As a result, PR professionals are

turning to content amplification and marketing strategies to develop and place their own content. These are often paid services, and sometimes the impact is questionable. Does reaching 100 million people through a paid content strategy have the same impact as an earned media placement?

Five skills for 2018

As communications professionals' roles change, is your team ready to meet the new demands? Below are five areas to focus on in the coming year.

- Grow your organization's social media presence
- Prepare to respond to emerging issues
- Build content-marketing expertise
- Seek new groups to partner with on outreach
- Do more with limited resources

Several survey respondents voiced concerns about the mounting pressure to demonstrate ROI through PR. Showing true impact often requires a significant investment for research dollars. But let's face it, many teams don't have those kinds of budgets. So, what can do you in lieu of big dollars? Creating dashboards that outline key metrics and track success toward goals are highly effective and resonate with client leadership. These one-page visually-appealing charts communicate important information quickly and succinctly to organizational leaders who have very little time to spend reading through massive amounts of stories, posts, and reports. Agreeing on the process measurements up front, you can report the number of original and syndicated stories, weekly impressions, engagements, shares, message uptake, frequency of organization's name-mentions, tone, and inclusion of brand values. Dashboards are essential for every project team and department.

If 2017 has been a year of increased workload, then 2018 will be the year of figuring out how to stay "present" on a range of communications channels and report the impact you are having for the organization. If you can't measure it, you probably shouldn't do it.

Sharon M. Reis is Principal and Tamara P. Moore is a Vice President with The Reis Group. ○



Sharon M. Reis



Tamara P. Moore



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Communicating in chaotic times

Breaking through with a brand's message in today's disrupted media environment can be tough, and while healthcare communicators aren't immune to these challenges, the industry is poised to quickly and nimbly adapt to the historic changes that have besieged newsrooms in recent years. **By Wendy Lund**

As I reflect on the state of the media in this country, the one thing that sticks in my mind is that “change is the only constant in life.” What struck me most about this quote is that it isn't by a great business leader or politician, but by Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher from 2,500 years ago. More than two millennia later, this adage still rings true, especially as it relates to the continued transformation within the newsroom.

The past couple of years have been a time of significant innovation in media, and newsroom strategies have changed along with it and will continue to do so in the years ahead. While these newsrooms adjust to operating on a new path to gathering news and keeping pace with their competitors, there is also the need to recognize two significant changes.

First, media is becoming big business, and many media operations are looking to transform digital subscriptions into the main engine of a billion-dollar business, one that could pay to put reporters on the ground in 174 countries even if (or when) the printing presses stop forever.

Multiple national print media outlets are also embarking on plans inspired by the strategies of Netflix, Spotify and HBO. That is, invest heavily in good journalism while continuously adding online services and features — from personalized fitness advice and interactive newsbots to virtual reality films — so that a subscription becomes indispensable to the lives of its existing subscribers and more attractive to future ones.

Second, new and novel platforms like STAT News, Quartz News, Tonic and VOX are doing away with the newsroom and, rather than hiring staff, are relying solely on a cadre of freelance writers. They have truly emerged as the new kings and queens of content, contributing important work to outlets ranging from the most high-profile to those covering the most nuanced scientific news.

The emergence of fake news

Running on a parallel track with these information innovations has been the proliferation of what we now refer to as “fake news.”

The Trump administration is demanding an unprecedented amount of attention and creating more work for journalists than anything we've seen in recent history. This, coupled with the focus on “fake news” that, more and more, has come to mean anything

that one simply disagrees with, is driving deeper discussions within all media about what this means for the industry in general. Many news outlets — including some of the most highly respected outlets — are adding staff to fact check every story coming out of their newsrooms. Others are ramping up their investigative and political units and hiring additional staff.

What does this mean for today's media? We may be seeing more attempts to verify news and a renewed commitment to “real journalism” in an effort to guarantee that no false, or even debatable, statements are published by top outlets where they risk losing credibility.

Interestingly, in the healthcare space, the pharmaceutical industry has been living with this for a long time. The stakes here are huge and the industry has to get a handle on the flow of information to protect not only their companies, but the patients they serve.

Efforts to combat fake news and maintain trust need to center on creating credible content, keeping ahead of trends and issues as they emerge and (quickly) countering inaccurate information.

Getting the job done

Given these challenges, breaking through with your messages in today's media environment is tough, and the healthcare industry is certainly not immune to the changes to newsrooms we've seen in the last few years.

I recently had the honor of serving as co-chair of the 13th ExL Pharma Public Relations & Communications Summit, one of the largest gatherings of communications professionals in the pharmaceutical space. At this year's Summit, we explored these obstacles and provided best practices to overcome them while ensuring key audiences are reached.

Regardless of the myriad challenges communicators face, I am always so impressed at how quickly and nimbly our industry is able to adapt to “get the job done.” Three key themes stuck with me:

Breaking through with your story. What does it take to get a reporter interested in your story? This is the key to getting covered in today's environment. Your story needs to do more than just “add noise,” it must provide value to your audiences. Also, reporters are competing with bloggers, social influencers and others who are pushing out information quicker than the media, so the speed at which you can get them informa-

tion could decide whether or not your story runs — reporters have less time to get their stories right, so providing them with immediate access to what they need is critical.

Channeling the patient voice. Now more than ever the consumer voice is heard and it's making a difference. It seems that everyone wants to hear from real people, and patient influencers can humanize your story and help you get your messages out. However, they are only effective if they are seen as credible and genuine, so maintaining the trust of their communities is critical.



Wendy Lund

Telling the customer story. Times have changed, healthcare has become very personal, the brand is no longer at the center of the universe, and new approaches are needed to reach audiences. One approach is through brand storytelling, and the key here is finding ways to inspire through stories. However, the story is about the customer, and the brand is just a plot point in their story. It's not about what you're selling, but how what you're selling ties into your customer's story.

Changes within the newsroom show no signs of slowing down and, as communicators, we will continue to adapt to these changes and find new ways to break through with our messages to benefit the patients we serve. It will certainly be interesting to see where things head in the years to come.

Wendy Lund is CEO of GCI Health. ○

COORDINATING MESSAGES

— Continued from page 24

Identify and train the key spokespeople vis-à-vis those key messages to ensure the same key points emerge regardless of who may be talking. Consider videos and/or podcasts that may be uploaded to social media, and monitor discussion across both companies' social channels.

The idea of coordinating communications between partners can be daunting. But with the right preparation and forethought, it can be an exciting time for a strategic communications program to cultivate trust with each company, and deliver results that meet the needs of all parties.

Donna LaVoie is President and CEO of LaVoieHealthScience. ○



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Why PR skill is not enough

The stakes in healthcare communications are uniquely high — more so than many other marketing disciplines — which places a burden on healthcare consultants not only to respect the gravity and complexity of the industry they serve, but to be more flexible while anticipating and identifying their clients' future needs.

By David Jarrard

When you work intimately with the professionals who provide care to patients — with physicians, with nurses and leaders of hospitals and health systems — it's not enough to be good at public relations. Not as PR is traditionally defined. Not today.

It's not enough to know the tricks of the trade, how to place media, how to build a message platform, how to stage an event, how to execute a digital strategy, how to work that list or move that needle. It's important, of course, but it's not enough.

The business of healthcare "delivery" through which care is offered across the country is not merely evolving into a slightly different version of its 100-year-old model. Its challenges stretch beyond the day-to-day of market acquisition, reputation scores and profile management.

Healthcare — and especially healthcare delivery — is being redefined as an industry. It's Blockbuster to Netflix. It's Delta to Southwest. It's Yellow Cab to Lyft. It's Tower Records to Spotify. It's Barnes and Noble to Kindle. Only, no one in the industry knows, for certain, exactly how the healthcare version of Netflix, Southwest or Spotify will manifest.

In this unprecedented moment, the work for senior healthcare communication professionals is to partner with industry's senior leaders to help them construct, articulate, then traverse a bridge that will lead their organization to the new world. Heady stuff.

The best healthcare public relations work today is change management on steroids where the stakes can be as high as life and death itself.

For the uninitiated or cynical, the last sentence may appear hyperbolic. But for families watching their local hospital close, their healthcare services disappear or move an hour away, for physicians and nurses struggling with exhaustion and shortages, it's no joke.

People who succeed as healthcare communicators need three key traits. They must be conversant in healthcare. They must bring new ideas to an evolving industry. Finally, they must be flexible and adapt to an industry that's constantly shifting under their feet.

Know the industry

The most important part of the healthcare industry — what makes it so confusing, but also what makes the work deeply meaningful — is that lives are at stake. Everything starts there. The charge to protect patients' lives dictates the dynamic between health systems and the physicians who work there. It explains why it's difficult to communicate across the system. Front-line nurses, for example, can't check their email because they're on their feet, saving lives.

This life-saving community within a hospital is large and diverse. Its operations require physicians, nurses, administrators, receptionists, janitors, food service employees, technicians and often researchers. For a system to work well, they must all row in the same direction.

Because healthcare is high-stakes and its institutions are big and complex, change happens slowly. Leaders are careful to roll out new, big ideas, given that one unforeseen disruption could jeopardize patient care.

But despite the inertia working against change at a healthcare organization, leaders at hospitals and health systems understand the imperative. The very nature of their business is transforming.

While a health system's revenue has traditionally depended on the number of patients treated and procedures performed, the industry is moving towards an unknowable future in which healthcare organizations will be compensated for their ability to improve the quality of their patients' lives.

Contribute fresh ideas

Amid seismic change, healthcare organizations are hungry for smart ideas from other industries. More and more, they are looking to examples outside of healthcare for inspiration. They need people with solid skillsets who can apply innovative ideas to this singular field.

In fact, healthcare consists of so many moving parts that a surprising suite of expertise applies. For example, professionals with manufacturing backgrounds understand complex supply chains. That knowledge is applicable at hospitals, which purchase vast quantities of drugs and de-

vices. People who have worked in retail understand gearing operations towards the consumer. That knowledge is applicable in healthcare as organizations prepare for a more transparent world and, ultimately, one in which a patient will price shop. Communicators with tech expertise could bring tremendous value to hospitals, which are struggling towards the goal of integrated electronic medical records.



David Jarrard

The caveat here is that new ideas must factor in the high stakes and complexity of the industry. To succeed, communicators need to respect the history of healthcare while guiding it towards an uncertain but inevitable new model.

Adapt as you go

The final necessary trait is flexibility. Often, hospitals ask healthcare communicators for solutions to challenges that arise on the spot. There is no blueprint for, say, a new patient experience module because it's completely novel.

New products and departments and ways of interacting with physicians surface constantly as hospitals transform, merge, partner or sell properties. Communicators often need to build the plane mid-air, so to speak.

Of course, the nature of PR is changing too. The news cycle and the resulting backlash happens faster than ever before. The field is evolving from a playbook of classic, siloed tools such as press releases, websites, print campaigns, etc., towards holistic relationship management.

This means that good healthcare communicators will evolve alongside the shifting industry.

That isn't easy. And it's even more difficult to be flexible while contributing fresh ideas and learning the industry's history.

But the work is necessary. Healthcare needs great communicators to alleviate the pain of massive transitions. As an industry, it needs our help. There is, in fact, no higher calling. Answer it.

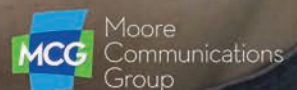
David Jarrard is President and CEO of Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock, Inc. ●

A shirtless man with a mustache and goatee, looking directly at the camera. He has several large, detailed tattoos on his arms and chest. He is holding a white teacup with a green rim in his right hand and a matching saucer in his left hand. The background is a solid dark blue.

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Promoting wellness authentically to Millennials

Best practices beauty brands can adopt to engage the Millennial market and connect with this prized demographic regarding the ingredients in their products.

By Lindsey Carnett

Millennials are a key consumer group that both heritage and emerging brands want to target. Highly educated and holding immense purchasing power, Millennials look to develop loyalty with actively engaged brands that produce quality products.

A Harris Poll survey found that 59 percent of women over the age of 35 believe buying green beauty is important to them, while an even larger percentage of Millennial women — 73 percent, to be exact — seek out cleaner, all-natural products.

Raised by technology, Millennials are exposed to more products and the ingredients inside those products, thus a demand for cleaner, organic, natural products has grown in recent years with social media's rise.

With such a competitive marketplace and a savvy consumer, which best practices can beauty brands adopt to market their ingredients to Millennials?

Target the source

Brands must engage with Millennials directly where they hang out. YouTube, Snapchat and Instagram are the most popular social media platforms for Millennials, and it's where they often do their product research.

Video has become an effective "try before you buy" sales tactic on these platforms, offering potential buyers an inside look as to the product's ease of use, technique of application and the opportunity to share information on product formulation so buyers can become familiar with specific ingredients and can call these ingredients out by name the next time they go shopping. Devising creative campaigns that capture the attention and create shareable conversation amongst Millennials is crucial for a brand to stand out amid a frequently transforming newsfeed.

A personal connection

For brands to create a personal connection with a customer, it's important that they consider partnering with influencers. GlobalData has revealed that 63 percent of Millennials are more likely to trust blogger and user reviews over brand claims and influencers are particularly popular in promoting of ingredients and product reviews.

Beauty brands can seek influencers to share why an ingredient is healthy or how a product's formulation uses the latest technique that treated their specific beauty needs. Influencers can also highlight the ease of use of products. As Millennials want quick results and are results-driven in their

beauty routines and purchasing decisions, and prioritize products that provide results, influencers offer potential buyers the opportunity to quickly see how, the effectiveness and the ease of use of a product prior to purchasing from a trusted source.

Simplicity

As quick as their Twitter feed changes, Millennials are over certain products and on to the next. With a consistent influx of ads and new products, how does a brand stay relevant? Simplicity. Millennials have short attention spans so they want to see a product, know about it and decide whether or not they want to buy it within five minutes of discovery. This means that a brand's unique selling point must be in the forefront in order to be recognized. Simple backgrounds, color and packaging stand out among the clutter that is social media and often these reign supreme. So, when it comes to packaging and promotion, keep it simple and your message clear.

Transparency

Millennials have immense purchasing power, and brands should be open about the ingredients and process behind the formulation of their products. Today's trending skin care ingredients are nature-based and Millennials are more likely to base their purchasing decisions on the ingredients listed on the product ingredient label in an effort to avoid toxic ingredients and harmful chemicals.

Customization

Millennials love products that are made specially for them. Companies like Birchbox and FabFitFun have based their business model around the consumer, offering customizable boxes that are delivered directly to your door offering handpicked products based on your wants, needs and likes. Now beauty companies have also adopted these customizable techniques with shampoos and face creams that are personalized with unique-to-you ingredients that provide results based on your needs.

By being open and honest about the ingredients that are present in their products, brands are able to build trust with their customers, as well as familiarize and educate them on the types of ingredients they can trust.

Don't just stop at the primary audience

With their high levels of influence, Millennials can easily target other consumers. A survey conducted by HRC Retail Advisory revealed that 82 percent of parents admitted

that their children have some influence over purchasing decisions. With parents, grandparents and other friends often asking the opinion of their digitally savvy millennial connections, brands should think strategically about how they can tap these markets.

As hundreds of brands seek to capture the Millennial market, it is crucial that they move away from one-way marketing strategies, and capitalize on social media and influencer marketing to garner the attention of an audience that continues to elude advertisers.



Lindsey Carnett

The creation of simple, authentic and visual shareable content promoted by influencers is a successful way to empower Millennials. For health and lifestyle brands alike, educating the Millennial about health benefits of a product or service is an important step to creating brand loyalty and customer retention.

Lindsey Carnett is CEO and President of Marketing Maven, named to the Inc. 5000 List of Privately Held Fastest Growing Companies in America. A member of the Forbes Agency Council and a FOLIO Magazine 2015 Top Women in Media Honoree, Lindsey is noted for helping to launch consumer healthcare brands. Lindsey@marketingmaven.com ○

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

— Continued from page 20

an episode that featured the actor's character in the hospital after the zombie apocalypse. The result was a viral piece of marketing that drew positive association and attention to the healthcare organization's reputation and mission.

Reputation: an asset unlike any other

Proactive reputation management is a win-win. Not only does a proactive approach create an effective shield against crises, it breeds positive associations among audiences and fosters meaningful relationships, as long as the organization consistently maintains its honesty, transparency and humility.

This is why we need to rethink proactive reputation management. It's not just planning for a crisis, but rather an integral part of any communications strategy from the outset.

Chowning Johnson is Executive Vice President, Account Management at Dodge Communications. Maria Recupero is Vice President, Account Director. ○



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Why anonymity is the enemy of engagement

The healthcare system in the U.S. has a tendency to render its consumers anonymous, and anonymity has a tendency to leave people ignored. How can we transform this industry in such a way that it begins to engage on personal and emotional levels?

By Brandon Edwards

People are troubled by the anger and violence demonstrated in recent events such as the Charlottesville protests and the Barcelona terrorist van assault on pedestrians. Attacking “other” people, the “anonymous,” seems alarmingly prevalent in today’s society, whatever the motivation or desired outcome.

Anonymity doesn’t always lead to attacks and violence. It’s easy to text \$10 to Red Cross hurricane relief when we don’t know anyone in Houston or Florida, but it’s tough to engage personally and emotionally with people who are suffering.

Historically, certain racial groups were “anonymous,” and in recent years the anonymous have begun to include the poor, homeless, addicted or mentally ill as well. Perhaps we want to engage with these groups — and many of us hear that call to action from the pulpit on Sunday — but the mere idea of engagement is much easier than actually engaging on a personal level. When people are anonymous to us, they can be ignored, feared or pitied, or even attacked.

Charlottesville and Barcelona are extreme examples of this trend, yet the healthcare system in America has its own tendency to make people anonymous. We talk about “population health” instead of the health of individuals, “patients” and “volume” instead of people, “covered lives” instead of humans and FTEs instead of nurses and caregivers.

Health plans talk about “members” and refer to people by numbers, and it often

seems like personal circumstances and human judgment are removed from the equation. Anonymity means we can just follow process, ignore personal circumstances and lump people together in convenient groups: demographically, geographically and economically.

The truth we all know, deep in our hearts and souls, is that we treat people differently when we know them — what they like and don’t like, what they care about and how we engage with them. “Anonymous” is the enemy of engagement.

We may not feel that we can affect the direction of the country, or the presidency or our society. Yet we have unusual influence in our role as healthcare marketers, because healthcare marketing is responsible for connecting with the entire community we serve. That may be a hospital’s community, or a community of people who suffer from the same disease or condition, or a community of caregivers we seek to inspire and support. Healthcare marketing can appeal to the “angels of our better nature,” helping people to see how they can live better, more productive, healthier lives.

So, if “anonymous” is the enemy of engagement, how do we engage? The answer may be different depending on the type of healthcare organization, but there are opportunities whether you work in a hospital, health plan, HIT company, or life sciences company.

We are uniquely positioned to engage with people — individuals — not only at

moments of great joy and sadness, but all the moments that matter in between. Even B2B engagement can be done at the human level, not in a “sea of sameness” where all companies sound the same as they address their prospective customers in impersonal ways. We can be leaders in moving past “anonymous” to engagement.

Engagement requires a certain mindset, but it can also be enabled by technology. CRM and marketing automation technology provides unparalleled opportunities to engage with people on an individual level, and a variety of digital data feeds give us insights into preferences, likes, dislikes, and priorities.

Social media channels provide an opportunity to communicate with people one-on-one, rather than serving as just another advertising channel, and people can opt-in to certain types of information. Unique, personalized URLs and calls-to-action in every marketing campaign element allow us to capture feedback, preferences, and interests. Mass advertising may have its place, but it does not engage — targeted, personalized, digital communication engage. These new approaches work well in B2B, B2C, B2P and across all other acronyms.

You may read some of these suggestions and think: How did this conversation shift from the benevolent desire to engage to a commercial exercise? In healthcare, we can do both simultaneously. When we meet people where they are, when we seek to know them and their interests, when we provide them useful information and valuable content, that’s when we move people from “anonymous” to engaged. The irony is, that’s also when we also derive business value. We do well by doing good, which is not something that happens in every industry. We’re blessed to have this opportunity.

We can decide to break the antiquated legacy of healthcare marketing communication to really engage with people, to know them, to connect with them on a personal level. And that will benefit your organization and the healthcare system as a whole. It may even change the country, in some small way.

Brandon Edwards is CEO of Revive-Health. ○



Brandon Edwards

Safety, rewards lead Millennials to adopt banking services

Research published by financial agency Vested analyzed Millennials’ banking habits as well as what financial services they’re more inclined to use, providing some keen insights into this generation’s attitudes concerning money and what factors influence the often-elusive demographic when selecting a banking product.

Less than half — 46 percent — of Millennials polled admitted visiting a bank in the last month, and only 20 percent said they trusted these institutions. In fact, the banking sector is trusted so little by Gen Y, most polled said they lend more trust to the press and government by comparison.

On the other hand, more than a third — 34 percent — admitted an allegiance to “big tech” (companies like Apple, Amazon, Facebook and Google), which ranked sig-

nificantly higher than any other institution listed.

Millennials also exhibit unusually higher levels of trust regarding new banking technologies than older generations: 93 percent said they had used PayPal, which was easily ranked the most popular online payment medium used. A vast majority of Millennials surveyed — 88 percent — said they’re more willing to adopt innovative banking products if they’re offered perks, premiums or loyalty points.

Data safety was cited as Millennials’ top reason for choosing a banking product, at 32 percent, followed by convenience, at 26 percent. The highest percentage of users polled — 32 percent — said convenience accounted for their preferred payment medium of choice. ○



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Steps to restore trust in America's healthcare industry

Healthcare companies must evaluate why public sentiment of the industry remains so low and take concrete steps to reset their image if they want to regain public trust and reestablish themselves as a trusted cornerstone of American life.

By Peter Prodromou

If we're going to absorb one lesson from the past few years, it should be that the common wisdom regarding what is and is not politically possible should be greeted with skepticism at best, distrust at worst. For healthcare companies, it's important to be realistic about American public opinion of the healthcare system and how those various forces are likely to intersect with policymakers in the years to come.

The most visible aspect of this is the rapid shifting of the Overton Window on single-payer healthcare. While the United States is one of the few developed nations without a universal healthcare system, the employer-based private insurance system is so woven into American life that, for decades, any proposals to replace it with a public system have been seen as the domain of the fringe left.

In 2014, 21 percent of Americans favored a "single payer" approach to healthcare. As of June this year, that number has climbed to 33 percent. Even more notable is how rapidly this idea seems to be gaining steam among mainstream Democrats, with fifteen Senate Democrats — including 2020 contenders like Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris, and even the traditionally centrist Cory Booker — backing Bernie Sanders' Medicare for All bill.

While there's little chance of this legislation passing in the immediate future, the rush to sign on to this previously niche policy demonstrates that these politicians are well aware of a deep dissatisfaction with the status quo of the American healthcare system. Public opinion polls bear this out. Americans' opinions of pharmaceutical companies are at an all-time low, with blame being cast for rising drug costs, along with an opioid epidemic currently devastating communities around the country. They see health insurance as needlessly bureaucratic and expensive, which forces them to make difficult decisions when they need to seek care.

This moment, then, is one in which healthcare companies must look at why public sentiment is turning against them and take concrete steps to right the ship and reset their image. In healthcare, as in so many other industries, the pace of innovation and change is outpacing the ability

of people, the government and our institutions to keep up. The push for higher profits, for new products to hit the market and for new technological solutions to be implemented has created dissonance at best, actual damage at worst.

This fast pace — the development of new treatments, the implementation of more efficient practices, the adoption of new business models — doesn't have to be viewed as a negative, but it does mean that healthcare companies have a new level of responsibility both in understanding the potential side effects of what they bring to market, as well as in how they message new approaches to the public, to policy makers, and to the media.

Reclaiming lost integrity and recapturing public trust will require a concerted communications effort on multiple fronts — backed by some tangible changes that demonstrate how innovations are serving public health outcomes and are not solely motivated by maximizing shareholder value.

First, there must be an effort made to have a dialogue with communities across America that shows that healthcare companies — be they insurers, pharmaceutical innovators, or healthcare providers — understand why people are skeptical and are responsive to these concerns. Companies should be willing to face tough questions and engage in some combination of listening tours, corporate social responsibility efforts, social media outreach and more that provides a platform for education on both sides.

Healthcare companies should work to be repositioned as allies, not obstacles, in the fight for better health outcomes. They should not make it seem like the status quo is enough, but instead make the case that they offer the tools and expertise needed to solve real concerns with healthcare delivery in the United States.

Parallel to this effort, there must be a commitment to a wholesale reputation overhaul and even working against bad actors, putting in place policies that forego short-term profit gain in favor of building long-term trust, and deploying a strong messaging effort that demonstrates an understanding of why public opinion on the

industry has soured.

This must be coupled with an optimistic, forward-leaning campaign that highlights advances in health outcomes — new treatments, new innovations, new ways to achieve access to services — that show real, tangible ways that underserved and disadvantaged communities are being buoyed by a vibrant healthcare industry.

Finally, these efforts must be backed with a strong outreach program aimed at the political decision makers who are responding to this same public frustration with the healthcare industry. Doing so will mean going beyond traditional lobbying channels — especially as a growing trend towards populism might make such efforts less effective. Instead, our political leaders and those in a position to influence their decision-making should be surrounded by a messaging ecosystem that exposes them to new ideas, changes the common wisdom and reinforces positive messaging around what the healthcare industry brings to the economy, and pushes for better public health. This means that, more than ever, a deep understanding of how these elite decision makers educate themselves on the issues that may affect their political futures — through media, through peers and through social pressures — is necessary.

The tide hasn't yet turned for the American healthcare industry. If left unchecked, public sentiment will likely continue to rise against it. Key sectors of this vibrant economic engine could find themselves fighting for survival.

By committing to a robust program designed to reset the industry's relationship with the American public — one which may require confronting some real issues with both how healthcare companies have positioned themselves and messaged their priorities — these companies can find surer ground and reestablish themselves as a trusted cornerstone of American life.

Peter Prodromou is President and Chief Executive Officer of Racepoint Global. ○



Peter Prodromou



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Without the right marketing strategy, your CX SUX

Plenty of agencies are now incorporating artificial intelligence and virtual reality into their healthcare PR and marketing mix, but many are using these new technologies ineffectively, and could use some guidance regarding how to successfully integrate these tools in a strategic way that helps marketers make informed decisions while providing maximum value.

By Victoria Aguiar

As with all new and shiny toys, marketers can't get enough of artificial intelligence and virtual reality. But just as fast as Snapchat announces a new filter, our ability to successfully use these technologies and drive impact for our client's businesses will vanish.

Some industries know how to benefit from fads. Remember when "flash mobs" were a component in every marketing and public relations campaign? If flash mobs were still a thing, I'm certain Facebook Live would be central to all marketing efforts. But in more regulated industries—financial, consulting, accounting, law and, of course, healthcare—marketers simply can't jump on the bandwagon immediately. Most of these industry marketers wait for others to jump in and track their activity and ramifications before making the decision whether or not to engage.

In my experience, it appears that early success at integrating new techniques and technologies into marketing campaigns can be attributed to something as basic as segmenting your audience, understanding

their needs and applying these new technologies where it makes the most common sense. We should always keep in mind that without the right marketing strategy, the customer experience sucks.

Let's look at virtual reality as an example. This market, which is forecasted to reach \$108 billion by 2021, is the cat's meow for marketers but showing a potential risk of investment is the first challenge they need to solve.

Some months ago, I attended a workshop in Philadelphia focused on the future of technology in pharma marketing. At that meeting, Natalie Mancuso, a Senior Product Manager at Regeneron, filled us in on one of their campaigns for Eylea, a treatment for macular degeneration. First, the marketing team got to know and understand the needs of patients with retinal diseases along their treatment journey. A critical issue for receiving the right medication is getting the physician to take into consideration the nuances associated with the symptom, "I can't see anymore." The challenge that Regeneron is aiming to solve is the communication gap between clinical physicians and patients. Based on Regeneron's understanding, patients were having a difficult time describing their visual impairment and how it affects their daily lives to physicians.

A potential solution? They built an app called "In My Eyes," which offers two different modes: story mode, which offers users three set daily scenarios such as having lunch with friends, and live mode, which allows users to impose symptoms such as black spots and blurriness virtually. Now physicians and caregivers are able to empathize with someone with a retinal disease. Mancuso's address was one that struck a chord. We can't get lost in the cool new tactic but leverage it to achieve our goal, she said, and she went on to say, "As marketers, we must have the will power to marry the right strategy with the right technology."

Taking a closer look at AI, most don't understand the true promise of AI, nor have they considered what AI could replace. For example, recently I communicated via email with a reporter and his AI assistant. The entire time I had no idea she was AI, all I knew is that she was exceptional and scheduled interviews in a timely matter.

AI in healthcare and medicine could mean a multitude of things. The data that

could be potentially used is astounding: medical records to treatment data could all be analyzed not only to provide healthcare with instructive pieces of information about how to design healthcare based on the needs and habits of patients but also serve to benefit patients who want to be proactive with better suggestions about lifestyle.



Victoria Aguiar

Next IT Healthcare, which develops virtual health coaches, embarked on a research study to test the impact of a virtual health coach or AI in the treatment of patients with relapsing Multiple Sclerosis or MS. The multi-center, open-label, single cohort, observational study will determine if Next IT Healthcare's Virtual Health Coach stores sufficient usage and engagement from patients to warrant a clinical trial comparing treatment with and without the Virtual Health Coach. According to a press release, the study will measure critical application engagement and usage metrics including user retention and churn, session length and frequency, user behavior and flow, feedback and reviews, conversation flow with the Virtual Health Coach, and more.

If results are positive, we could see huge potential for enhanced consumerism in healthcare just from the use of AI. Additionally, from my opinion, people living with MS would benefit from a companion to help with medical adherence, especially given the variable and unpredictable nature of MS.

Technology has great potential in a number of industries, but it may have its greatest impact in healthcare. Our successful integration of new technologies is directly tied to making smart and informed decisions as marketers and always reminding ourselves to marry the right technology with the right audience.

Victoria Aguiar is a Vice President at Bliss Integrated Communication within the agency's Healthcare Practice. She specializes in the life sciences industry, helping advocacy groups, biopharma, medical device, diagnostics, IT and research companies to think critically about marketing and communication initiatives that help achieve their business objectives. ○

PR news brief

Finn Partners acquires ABI

Finn Partners has entered into a formal agreement to acquire New York-based global B2B firm ABI Marketing Public Relations. Financial terms of the deal were not publicly disclosed.

Founded in 1980, ABI specializes in marketing for the industrial and trade sector, providing services primarily for packaging, food and beverage, life sciences, chemical, plastic, automotive, aerospace and environmental companies. The New York-based firm maintains additional offices in London, Frankfurt, Singapore and Shanghai.

In light of the deal, the agency will now be known as ABI, a Finn Partners company. Founder and CEO Alan Isacson now takes the title of managing partner. All of ABI's offices will remain, with the exception of the firm's New York location. All staff from that office will relocate to FP's Midtown headquarters.

Finn Partners founding partner Peter Finn told *O'Dwyer's* that the acquisition widens the independent agency's global footprint, effectively adding new outposts in Asia and Europe, while introducing industrial marketing to the firm's toolkit.

"ABI will build upon our existing strength in B2B and brings new expertise in the industrial sector," Finn said. "Additionally, by adding to our existing offices in London and Singapore, and by bringing new offices in Shanghai and Frankfurt to Finn Partners, ABI expands our international footprint. Growing our international operations is a high priority for Finn Partners."

M&A advisor Gould + Partners facilitated the ABI deal.

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Reversing PR's declining profits

Earnings at the largest independent agencies and holding companies have dipped in recent years, even as the U.S. economy has turned around. By thinking outside of the box, however, the industry can change course and regain profitability.

By Anna Ruth Williams

Between 1990 and 2000, the world's 10 biggest PR firms' fee income ballooned from \$910 million to \$2.5 billion. Beautiful office suites were constructed. Small and mid-sized firms were sold for cold, hard cash — and lots of it.

Fast forward to 2016 when Omnicom's PR segment recorded annual organic growth of 2.8 percent. The holding company wasn't alone. The PR firms within Interpublic Group's Constituency Management Group posted organic growth in the mid-single-digit range throughout 2016. Meanwhile, Publicis in 2016 reported a net loss of \$564 million.

Even the largest PR firm in the world is feeling this pain: *PRWeek* reported that Edelman had its lowest growth in seven years in 2016, with organic revenue up just 1.7 percent. President and CEO Richard Edelman portrayed 2016 as a "transition year"—but is it really? Did our industry just have one funky year? Apparently not. In Q2 of this year, the big five holding companies collectively recorded organic growth of 0.7 percent—compared to four percent growth every quarter in 2014 and 2015.

This progressive decline should raise a red flag for agency executives across the world. Global PR industry growth slowed five percent in 2015, and Gould Partners says annual agency operating profits have consistently fallen, dropping from about 19 percent in 2011 to about 15 percent today.

I'm not the only person in the industry trying to understand how a 120-year old industry has gotten in this position during an economic upturn. Myself, along with a rising crop of young, first-time agency owners, are testing new strategies in an effort to regain profitability. The following new-era ideas are rooted in one simple belief—that clients, people and profits are all inextricably intertwined.

Invest in your people

I'm a pastor's kid, so I first learned about business by watching tithing trends. If my dad spent extra time tending to a family in his flock one week, there was usually an upturn in pew attendance and the offering plate on Sunday. This was the first of many valuable entrepreneurship lessons I learned: if you put your people first, you'll be a healthier, more successful organization.

Years later, I realized this mentality wasn't always embraced in the private sector, even

in my beloved PR. For example, professional development is abysmal. The SoDA Report says the number of agencies "not providing any training to their staff almost tripled in 2016, growing from five percent to 14 percent."

Our industry is forced to change every day. With every newsroom layoff and Facebook algorithm change, we must adapt. Agencies that don't put their people's growth first will keep losing client revenue because results will suffer.

Moreover, Gallup found that 87 percent of Millennials rate "professional or career growth and development opportunities" as important to them in a job. I believe so strongly in this that in 2016, ARPR shredded industry trends by investing an average of \$3,200 and 40 hours of professional development in each employee. The result? Ninety-four percent employee retention and the majority of clients increasing contract sizes with us.

Perks don't kill profits

PR consistently ranks as one of the top 10 most stressful professions; and according to *PRWeek's* 2017 Salary Survey, practitioners say this stress increases slightly year-over-year. Appeasing clients, wooing journalists and staying on top of the 15th million Google product update isn't a cake walk. To motivate, inspire and retain today's workforce against this backdrop, PR employers are beginning to offer non-traditional perks. Whether it's wearing jeans to work, offering unlimited vacation or providing standing desks—added benefits are often nominal line items in an annual budget that offer big benefits.

For example, 85 percent of the PR workforce is female, yet a majority of agencies don't offer flexible schedules to accommodate working mothers (it's no wonder only 60 percent of women make it to management level). For comparison, look at outdoor clothing giant Patagonia which offers parents on-site childcare, school buses, two-months paid paternal leave and more. As a result, they've retained 100 percent of moms and estimate this investment has balanced out to a mere 0.05 percent of revenue.

While Millennials prefer benefits like team socials and free snacks, perks such as flexible schedules and commission potential are important to Gen X, since many of them are caring for their children and/or aging

parents. Retaining all levels of talent is critical to preserving our industry's reputation and individual agency/client satisfaction, which equates directly to profits.

Start spending on technology

Speaking of return on investment, look no further than the screen you're reading this on. PR firms only spend 1.9 percent of their annual revenue on technology, versus the 5.2 percent spent by other industries. Many agencies still use antiquated hardware and clunky software programs; however, modern devices and cloud-based programs can dramatically increase productivity and efficiency. Here are a few very basic examples:

- If your accounts receivable person is going to the bank to make physical deposits twice a week, you're losing six hours of productivity per month, plus mileage costs. However, if you invest in a portable bank check scanner (~\$50/month to lease), it allows checks to be scanned and deposited in seconds.

- Desk handsets cost about \$100/each and land line contracts can cost up to \$1,000 per extension. Today's cloud-based phone providers are only a couple hundred bucks per month, offer better functionalities, and roll directly to your employee's cell phones. This saves valuable hardware and service costs, while also eliminating that giant clunker taking up space on workstations.

The savings an agency can experience by modernizing technology can free up even more budget for what's most important — tech that helps workers meet today's client expectations. The emergence of omnichannel everything, marketing automation and big data require agencies to become more technologically adept. Calling journalists from a landline and giving clients archaic impressions doesn't cut the mustard today. PR agencies should invest in modern hardware, databases, social media tools and analytics platforms to more deeply deliver measureable ROI, which correlates to client retention and upsells.

Profitability in a new era

Can our industry experience another heyday period? Absolutely. But the future of PR hinges on our ability to evolve business models, budgets and thought processes. I'm confident that if we harness the power of our people and tools, we can all work together to create lucrative businesses for both us and our clients.

Anna Ruth Williams is CEO and Founder of ARPR in Atlanta. ○



Anna Ruth Williams

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Change remains one of PR's few prevalent themes

'Change for the better' is lesson learned from four decades in the public relations business.

By Lenore Cooney

What's my takeaway from 40 years spent in public relations? Change, certainly. And most of it for the better.

Sure, there were the lunch losses: First, drinking at lunch, then lunching with an editor, then lunch period. Then there came the rapid acceleration of turnaround, from snail mail to Fed Ex to fax then email, messaging and Twitter. Farewell to telephone media pitches, and to bright young job candidates who boasted that their highest qualification was being "good with people."

Substantive change, however, came in the form of steadily increasing professionalization of public relations and the growing recognition of its importance to organizations: commercial, scientific, professional, not-for-profit and governmental.

Below are a few of the important changes in PR professionals' roles and practices in recent decades. They are specific to healthcare but also apply across the PR spectrum.

Brightest spots

Expanded range of PR practice. Today's PR professional has a wide range of tactical responsibilities beyond the traditional media relations and monitoring and events: publishing, content sharing and promotion, community engagement, issue advocacy and more. Most important, PR professionals are now being asked not "what should we say" inasmuch as "what should we do."

Depth of knowledge of the client's enterprise. Our grasp of the intricacies of the organizations we serve—what goes into them, what internal and external challenges they face from many sides—as well as our ability to analyze and forecast and solve problems, has earned us a seat at the decision-making table.

Health Unlimited surveys empowered consumers

Health Unlimited and Foresight Factory surveyed more than 4,000 people globally to identify key trends to help marketers understand how consumers are dealing with integration of technology in the healthcare market and whether it provides them better access to decisions. Their report, "Tapping in to Consumer Trends to Improve Health," identified five key developments:

Economic uncertainty and rising costs are reshaping consumer/government relations, and people must take ownership of future healthcare needs because governments may no longer provide "safety nets" for seniors.

Consumers are realizing the power of

Focus on advancing organizational goals. PR is no longer seen as nicety or a capacity tapped only in times of crisis, but an essential part of organizational development. PR is now expected to "make things happen" and identify the strategies to do it. Tactics—which once defined PR—are now merely the tools to execute strategy.

Goodbye "general public." The emphasis on results—and their measurement—mandates thoughtful and selective audience segmentation. Counting undifferentiated impressions will no longer cut it. Engaging communications targets takes careful and deft cultivation—another area where PR can excel.

The end of communications parochialism. We used to call them silos, as each communications discipline did its best to capture the largest role—and share of budget—in the endeavor. With the ascendance of "channel agnosticism," PR has the opportunity—and the standing—to recommend and command the range of expertise needed to get the job done.

Challenges at hand

Change comes in many forms, some of them less tractable than others. The most significant questions for the future of PR practice lie in the external environment. In healthcare, as in many other sectors, we see the rise in public acceptance of opinion as equivalent to fact and anecdote having the same weight as data. This is not a brand-new development. Decades ago I recall Donald Kennedy, a former Food and Drug Commissioner and President of Stanford University, noting the trend in attitudes toward science: "It's as if we believe it that it is good to have ideas and all ideas are equal."

The broad dismissal of expertise in favor

of their actions and embracing more self-discipline and purposeful moderation.

People are exercising more control over their health via use of self-tracking and self-diagnosis devices.

Consumers are becoming more aware of the value of their health data and selective with whom they share it with. They are making daily risk-benefit analyses about when and how to use their personal information.

Robotization, smart systems and people-free delivery are extending into healthcare and driving consumers to believe they will be able to live independently at home as they age. ○

individual convictions is as troubling as it is understandable. The rise of "storytelling" as a communications device has certainly been effective but perhaps at the cost of tolerance for nuance, context and complexity.

Other social and political factors have potential impact on PR professionals' work. One is the swelling skepticism among swaths of the public in the US and other industrialized countries regarding the statements and actions—if not the very existence—of politicians and policymakers, corporations, media and the public relations industry. While pointed questioning and evaluation makes for a vibrant democracy, outright rejection of all those labeled "elites" can curdle into unhealthy cynicism. This will make the work of all communications specialists trying to inform, engage and persuade all the more difficult.

Finally, we have yet to understand how much of "traditional" media will survive and in what form. We've already seen some versions of what could replace it. New online aggregators spring up every month, many with an overtly ideological cast; this can exacerbate the "echo chamber" issue whereby audiences seek out only those sites that reinforce their set beliefs. And while the Blogosphere is a remarkable phenomenon that does indeed constitute a kind of citizen journalism, it has limited breadth and depth. The investigative reporting and analysis vital to a strong Fourth Estate is beyond its capability, at least for now.

Moving forward

There's no doubt the future will bring changes to our roles and an evolution of the hard and soft skills required. Technology will continue to alter what we do and how we do it. The larger issue, however, is how well we will serve our clients in the face of a rapidly changing cultural, political, scientific and economic reality. But if we remain faithful to the principle of seeking to achieve a "mutuality of satisfaction" among stakeholders, the PR profession will be key to healthy enterprises within a strong society.

We can take heart that no matter how many programs for scenario planning hit the market, the human factor — judgment, compassion, honesty and creativity — will remain fundamental to PR practice. No robot can replace you.

Lenore Cooney is Co-Founder of Cooney Waters, which is now part of Health Unlimited. ○



Lenore Cooney

Ogilvy UK chief defects to Publicis

Annette King, CEO of Ogilvy Group's UK operation and 17-year veteran of the WPP unit, is taking the helm of archrival Publicis Groupe's British offering.



Annette King

She'll be in charge of Publicis Communications, Publicis Media, Publicis. Sapient and Publicis Health.

At Ogilvy, King held key posts such as lead on American Express across EMEA, Managing Director of Ogilvy Interactive and New Business Director for OgilvyOne.

Paul O'Donnell, Ogilvy's Chairman/CEO for EMEA, will replace King on an interim basis. ○

McCall takes over FTI's Strat Comms unit

Mark McCall, COO and Chief of FTI Consulting's Americas strategic communications unit, is taking over for Ed Reilly, who will focus on client development and transition execution.



Mark McCall

Prior to the strat comms slot, McCall headed FTI's special situations group, responsible for M&A activity, restructuring and IPOs. The New York-based McCall also worked in financial/IR in Chicago for Hill+Knowlton Strategies and Burson-Marsteller.

Reilly was president of KRC Research, Vice Chairman of Bozell Sawyer Miller Group, Founder of Westhill Partners before joining Financial Dynamics as Managing Director in 2005. He assumed the strat comms helm in 2011.

The strat comms unit posted a 7.4 percent decline in Q2 revenues to \$46.2 million due to sluggish project-based revenue in North America, especially for financial communications and corporate reputation work. ○

Padilla picks up Himle

John Himle, Founder and former CEO of Minneapolis-based shop Himle Rapp & Company, has moved to Midwest PR powerhouse Padilla, where he's been named executive vice president and

senior counsel.

He officially joins the Minneapolis-based agency in early October.

Himle founded Himle & Associates in 1982, which was rebranded as Himle Horner Inc. in 1989 with the arrival of veteran Republican consultant and public affairs pro Tom Horner. The agency was renamed again after the arrival of president Todd Rapp, who was previously executive director to former Minnesota House Speaker and Majority Leader Phil Carruthers.

Rapp bought Himle's ownership stake in the firm last month, making him sole owner and CEO of the firm. It is now titled Rapp Strategies, Inc.

Before joining the PR world, Himle was former executive director of the Minnesota Agri-Growth Council. He also served five terms as a member of the Minnesota House of Representatives. ○

SV&C's Doorley shifts to Brunswick

Jonathan Doorley, an 11-year veteran of Sard Verbinen & Co., has joined Brunswick in New York as a Partner.

He will deal with mergers and acquisitions, shareholder engagement and special situations such as regulatory investigations, activism and litigation, financial matters.

Doorley worked with SVB in New York and co-headed its London outpost. He developed corporate position, investor relations and multi-country media programs as well as thought leadership.

Earlier, he worked at Morgan Stanley in New York. ○



John Himle



Jonathan Doorley

Birkett Rakow soars with Alaska Air

Diana Birkett Rakow is the new VP-External Relations at Alaska Airlines, succeeding Joe Sprague, who left Sept. 1 after a 17-year stint.

She was VP-PA, Communications and Brand Manager at Kaiser Permanente, joining the managed care consortium with its acquisition of Group Health Cooperative.

Rakow led Group Health's 75-member strong PA/marketing team and its budget

in excess of \$25 million.

Earlier, she worked the US Senate Finance Committee.

At the airline, Rakow is in charge of corporate communications, government relations and community outreach teams in Alaska, Hawaii, San Francisco and Seattle. ○

three years on



Diana Birkett Rakow

Rubenstein PR installs Isaacson as CFO

Rubenstein Public Relations has appointed Michael Isaacson as the New York PR powerhouse's Chief Financial Officer.

He assumes the post immediately.

Isaacson joins the agency from New York-based marketing agency DiGennaro Communications, where he served as CFO. He was previously a Finance Director at architecture and planning consultancy DEGWI.

Earlier in his career Isaacson was a Manager at Ernst & Young, and later, Senior VP of Finance at video producer and distributor RHI Entertainment (formerly Hallmark Entertainment). ○



Michael Isaacson

FP finds Geller to lead NY consumer unit

Finn Partners has appointed Brooke Geller to the role of Senior Partner. She'll lead the agency's consumer practice in New York.

Brooke joins Finn from full-service firm DKC, where she was stationed for more than seven years and was Senior Vice President. Prior to that, she was a VP in Rogers & Cowan's entertainment and lifestyle division. Earlier in her career, she was an Account Executive at New York-based lifestyle agency Nike Communications as well Ruder Finn.

As head of FP's New York consumer practice, Geller will oversee planning, client management, event marketing and product publicity. She'll report to Managing Partner Alicia Young. ○



Brooke Geller

Millennial PR firm owners will shake up industry

As Millennial-run PR firms become mainstream, older firm owners — and the industry at large — need to recognize the serious impact this demographic is having on the PR landscape.

By Rick Gould

Millennial communicators can't catch a break. As they occupy a growing part of the PR field, this demographic bears the brunt of withering criticism from some of their elders regarding their work ethic and general attitude.

We frequently hear from older PR firm owners about the challenges of both hiring and retaining Millennials. They say Millennial employees suffer from an acute sense of entitlement and often want to get promoted before they have demonstrated their PR chops and/or brought in some new business.

PR firm owners also tell us that Millennial employees lack interpersonal skills. That's problematic for the growth of the firm, because account executives — many of them Millennials — need to cultivate relationships with their clients in person and be able to focus on the conversation at hand and not check their smartphone every two minutes.

However, the above description of Millennials is just part of the story and, in fairness, may be a victim of stereotypical thinking. This is not to deny the frustrations among PR firm owners about how to manage Millennial communicators more effectively. High-priced media and marketing conferences are marketed and sold on that premise alone.

At the same time, it's important that older PR firm owners — and the industry at large — recognize the growing phenomenon of Millennial PR firm owners.

They might be few in numbers right now,

but they are coming on strong. These are PR executives in their 20s and 30s who — in stark contrast to older generations of PR firm owners — are financially and digitally savvy and do not necessarily have a strong emotional bond to their firm.

Not beholden to traditional PR models

Millennial owners may have had a stint or two at a PR firm or launched their agency soon after graduating from college. Either way, they are not wedded to traditional PR business models.

They won't hire two executives after landing a sizable account only to let those two employees go after the client suddenly departs for another agency. They're more apt to hire strictly based on strategic imperatives and bring in nontraditional PR employees — online analytics specialists, videographers, etc. — who can monetize social media channels and prepare the firm for a post-digital marketplace.

Millennial PR firm owners also have a sharper focus than previous generations of owners on how to strengthen financial performance, which will add value to the firm. That means they won't stand for over-servicing and take the time to train employees to ensure the firm in no way works for free.

They know what they don't know

Millennials have also been criticized for being know-it-alls. However, from my experience, Millennial PR firm owners know what they don't know and are eager to learn about management practices — hard and

soft — that will bolster the top and bottom lines and make the agency a better place to work.

Many older PR firm owners are allergic to disruption, whereas Millennial PR firm owners embrace it. Of course, they want to do an exceptional work for clients, grow their agency and generate new revenue streams. But they don't care how they get there.

Take Anna Ruth Williams, founder and CEO of Atlanta-based ARPR: "Having started ARPR (in 2012) at the age of 28, I hadn't managed other agencies and therefore wasn't tied to traditional processes and practices. The result was a high risk tolerance and tendency to try new strategies," she said. "My Gen X and baby boomer counterparts balk at some of my decisions, like implementing unlimited vacation, flexible schedules, and generous technology and professional development investments."

She added: "While the big holding companies are seeing less than one percent growth, we continue to grow 45 percent year-over-year, with 94 percent employee retention."

As Millennial-run firms become mainstream, we think they'll have a serious impact on the PR industry. Many of these owners are eager to sell their firm before they are 40 years old and move on to the next endeavor. That's going to bring a significant change to the PR landscape, in terms of more digitally driven PR properties being available to acquire and/or merge.

These changes will evolve. In the meantime, there's plenty that Millennial firm owners need to know about how to increase profitability and improve the value of their firm, and they're not afraid to ask. They appreciate that they don't have all the answers.

But older PR firm owners can learn a thing or two from Millennials, such as how to lead with a digital-first mindset, encourage non-traditional hires and protect the business, at all costs, even if that means turning down a prospect who's trying to lowball a fair price for PR services.

By mixing and matching the best skill sets from one another, Millennial owners and non-Millennials can boost the overall appeal of the industry among creative services buyers. Millennial firm owners are serious businesspeople and a force to be reckoned with. It's a juicy story for the PR industry.

Rick Gould, CPA, J.D., Managing Partner of Gould+Partners, is author of "Doing It the Right Way: 13 Crucial Steps For A Successful PR Agency Merger or Acquisition." ○



Rick Gould

College students flunk First Amendment

College students are clueless when it comes understanding First Amendment protections, according to a survey conducted by the liberal-leaning Brookings Institution.

Released Sept. 18, the poll of 1,500 students found a plurality (44 percent) believe the First Amendment doesn't protect "hate speech," while 62 percent say it legally requires an event to present speakers from both sides of an issue.

More than half (53 percent) of respondents wants a protective bubble to shield them "from speech or expression of viewpoints that are offensive or biased against certain groups."

Sixty-one percent of students who identify as Democrats want to be sheltered from offensive speech, versus 47 percent of Republicans and 45 percent of Independents.

Brookings found a majority of students (51 percent) believe it's acceptable to shout down a controversial speaker, while 19 percent support the use of violence to prevent one from speaking.

John Villasenor, senior fellow at Brookings and UCLA law professor conducted the poll.

He expressed concern that what happens on campus often foreshadows broader societal trends.

"Today's college students are tomorrow's attorneys, teachers, professors, policymakers, legislators and judges," he wrote. "If, for example, a large fraction of college students believe, incorrectly, that offensive speech is unprotected by the First Amendment, that view will inform the decisions they make as they move into positions of increasing authority later in their careers." ○



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Charting the 'inner space' frontiers of medical science

What my family vacation to NASA's Kennedy Space Center taught me about medical discovery.

By Michael O'Brien

I couldn't hide my excitement as we pulled up to NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, last month. On a family vacation to Orlando, I insisted that we make the 45-minute drive to the famous NASA landmark. Always a bit of a space nerd, I beamed as we entered the gates.

My childhood was filled with grainy black-and-white memories of rockets, brave astronauts and amazing images of space. But here they were, in living color. Brought to life. Especially interesting to me was the exhibit on the Apollo space program, the one that put us on the Moon. We saw the engineering feats, made possible by brilliant scientist who had no roadmap, that marked our nation's yearning to explore, to innovate, to discover.

The history of discovery and exploration was never more alive than in those heady days in the 1960s, when President Kennedy set an audacious goal: Putting an American on the Moon within nine years. Keep in mind, when Kennedy made this pronouncement, NASA had only just mastered getting an astronaut safely into space. Kennedy's reason for setting this goal was even more bold, as he outlined in his famous 1961 speech.

"We choose to go to the Moon," the President said. "We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

The spirit of innovation, a dedication to discovery — something that's hard — drove NASA to accomplish that goal. A country cheered. National pride soared. And the world took notice.

But, during a bus tour of the launch pads

throughout Cape Canaveral, my mood changed. My excitement turned to sadness. You see, the launch pads were in disrepair. They're barely used anymore. Skeletons of NASA's past glory. The only use of a few of the pads now is from private space companies, whose goals appear to be space tourism and supply missions to the International Space Station. No more shuttles. No more manned missions.

So much for discovery. Never mind, exploration.

Then it occurred to me. There still is discovery, exploration and scientific audacity in the United States. Don't look to outer space. Think inner space.

The United States leads the world in drug, device and medical discovery. We've achieved more in a short period of time than any other nation, and more than anyone ever imagined. Diseases eradicated. Quality of life improved. Lives saved. Apart from the tech industry, medical science is now our last bastion of discovery. This includes Immuno-oncology; a cure for Hep C; HPV and other critical vaccines; treatments for rare diseases; advancements in cardiac care, cancer, neurology; innovations in provider/hospital care delivery; and on and on.

And yet, it's under attack. From the threat of deep cuts to National Institutes of Health funding, the nation's seat of basic science that powers medical science, to policies that could make it more difficult or even impossible to access medicines and healthcare. If we're not careful, medical discovery and exploration may very well suffer the fate of those rusted out launch pads. A monument to a more inspired time.

Medicine is a tricky issue in the U.S. right

now. There are certainly some topics worthy of thoughtful debate, such as drug access, pricing, the Affordable Care Act and possible replacement, and regulatory burdens. And patients and advocacy groups must have a seat at the table as we search for answers. But we can't let these issues stop discovery and exploration. We need to keep innovating. Not because it's easy, but because it's hard.

We must continue to fund programs that can make a difference. The Cancer Moonshot initiative is one.

Aptly named after Kennedy's audacious goal, Cancer Moonshot seeks to accelerate cancer research to make more therapies available to more patients. It's funded for a number of years, but do we have the will to continue? Will a commitment to discovery and audacity be lasting? I hope so.

As a health public relations and patient advocacy professional, I view communicating about science as my life's mission. I've dedicated myself to ensuring patients' voices are heard. I will not relent and encourage anyone who loves science and patient care to join me in my mission to tell the story of healthcare exploration and discovery.

Back at the Kennedy Space Center, as the sun was low in the sky and we were about to leave, we ducked into an exhibit about the Orion project, NASA's dream of a manned mission to Mars. It's decades away, if not longer, and is really only an idea at this point. Who knows if we'll ever muster the vision and resolve — let alone dedicate the funding — to achieve such a feat. We watched a video spelling out NASA's plans. Toward the end, it explained that there are many things they have yet to figure out about how they can get to Mars and back. The video then asked the youngsters in the audience to help them find answers by becoming scientists.

What if the person who holds the key to unlocking these answers is unable to fulfill their potential because of illness? Medicine matters. Health drives everything we are. It allows us to achieve our life's potential. We need to dedicate ourselves to discovery, and continue to lead the world. It should elicit wonder and national pride.

Because medicine can give life to the next generation of scientists, researchers, medical professionals, and, yes, explorers.

Michael O'Brien is Managing Director of JPA Health Communications. ○



Michael O'Brien

Brodeur plans to expand services into the 'Final Frontier'

Omnicom's Brodeur Partners has formed a space group to help clients exploit the potential offered by space travel, asteroid mining and exploration.

"Space exploration and development could be the biggest business opportunity since the computer," said Brodeur Partners chairman John Brodeur, who is leading the practice.

The Federal Aviation Administration estimates the size of the global space industry at \$324 billion, with government spending accounting for only 24 percent of that total. According to consulting firm NewSpace Global, there are nearly 1,000

private space companies today, up from 125 companies in 2011. That number is expected to hit 10,000 by 2026.

That leaves a lot of room in which the so-called NewSpace economy can develop. Companies are working on plans to develop satellites, organize space tours, mine asteroids, and conceptualize cities on Mars.

Brodeur Space Partners will help entrepreneurial space companies formulate communications strategies, develop the space environment responsibility and sustainably, and create meaningful and authentic brands. ○

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How PR can help the Dreamers

A well-organized PR and lobbying campaign can prevent a mass deportation of Dreamers.

By William Comcowich

They call them the Dreamers and their dreams may be about to end. They are undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children and granted temporary reprieve from the threat of deportation.

Mass deportation of Dreamers would be a travesty. It would be morally repugnant. A well-organized PR and lobbying campaign can prevent it from happening. The term Dreamers comes from the proposed Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act that offered young immigrants legal status if they attended college or served in the military. The bill never passed, but the name stuck.

Unable to get the DREAM Act passed, the Obama Administration implemented the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals that deferred deportation of children who meet certain criteria, including background checks. Those who qualify, the Dreamers, can defer deportation for two years, and then can reapply. They receive a quasi-legal status, not a path to citizenship or legal permanent residency. They can attend college and work legally as well as pay income taxes.

Ending dreams

The Trump Administration plans to end the program. While it will respect work permits already issued, meaning current DACA participants are safe from deportation at least for now, it will soon stop accepting new applications.

Congress has six months to act before protected individuals lose their ability to work, study and live without fear of deportation. Without renewal or replacement of DACA, roughly 800,000 will be at risk of deportation when their two-year permits expire.

Congress may be in a bind. It was unwilling, or unable, to grant a path to citizenship in the past. That task may not be any easier. However, the young people participating in the program are viewed more sympathetically than other immigrants. Not surprisingly, ending their legal status is highly controversial.

Deporting the Dreamers is inhumane. They were brought to this country as children, sometimes as infants. They may know no other country other than the U.S. They may speak no other language than English, as Former President Barack Obama pointed out in a Facebook post.

Having lived in this country since childhood, the Dreamers are Americans in every way except on paper. They've gone to

school. They've pledged allegiance to the flag. They've enrolled in school. Some have joined the military.

"To target these young people is wrong — because they have done nothing wrong," Obama wrote. "By definition, if they are part of this program, they are solid, wonderful young people of good character."

"What if our kid's science teacher or our friendly neighbor turns out to be a Dreamer? Where are we supposed to send her? To a country she doesn't know or remember, with a language she may not even speak?"

Ending DACA is also bad for the economy. Dreamers include engineers, teachers, health care providers and other professionals. They pay income taxes, start businesses, work in the military, and otherwise help their communities and the country.

The arguments for deportation of Dreamers for the most part rest on a mean-spirited interpretation of the law: They came here illegally; they are illegal; they take jobs of American citizens; they don't belong; deport them. That line of argument certainly doesn't reflect traditional American values and lacks compassion for which our country is noted. In addition, the argument that they "take jobs of American citizens" is just plain wrong.

In announcing the administration's policy, Attorney General Jeff Sessions made some inaccurate accusations about the Dreamers. He said DACA caused a surge of minors across the border. Wrong: Child immigration rates today are consistent with those in 2011 before DACA. Sessions contended Dreamers drain Social Security. Absolutely untrue: They do not receive Social Security benefits; those who are adult workers contribute to Social Security. He said most Dreamers are adult illegal aliens. The truth is that they are given Dreamer status when they are kids. The Dreamers have done nothing wrong. They don't deserve to be deported.

How PR pros can respond

Political animals that they are, members of Congress will respond to an outpouring of opinion in favor of not deporting Dreamers. It's time for a massive PR effort to support the Dreamers and press Congress to action. With their writing, storytelling and content marketing skills, PR pros are best qualified to sway public opinion and pressure Congress.

Corporate and not-for-profit PR departments can publish and distribute stories

about Dreamers who work at their organizations. PR pros can leverage the power of social media to publicize the stories on social media.

They can create lists of Dreamers. If people find they personally know a DACA recipient, supporting their deportation will be much more difficult. Relaying their life stories may be the best way to gain sympathy.

PR can work with influential organizations and individuals to develop and promote content that urges Congress to act.

Corporate and nonprofit CEOs can write opinion pieces that support Dreamers and cite Dreamers on their staffs. PR pros can assist Dreamers in writing to members of Congress and can circulate their open letters widely. Churches and other organizations can organize events to support the Dreamers. Religious leaders can advocate for the Dreamers and make the moral arguments against deportation.

In addition, organizations can help influencers publish pieces with suggestions on legislation that helps Republicans out of their bind. Members of Congress who support the Dreamers can work with opponents to find a mutually agreeable solution and sway their votes.

Celebrities can publicize the stories of Dreamers. Sports teams can celebrate Dreamers during breaks in the event. Musicians can create songs about Dreamers. Economists can write analyses of the economic value of Dreamers. Most everyone can provide financial support to organizations that support the Dreamers.

All men and women of good faith who believe Dreamers should stay should take some action to protect the Dreamers — and should continue to contribute to the Dreamers cause until the battle is won and the country grants Dreamers the freedom from fear of being deported and the right to live and work in the U.S. Public relations professionals have the communications skills to lead the effort.

PR professionals are in a unique position to point out the cruelty of terminating DACA and deporting young people who entered the United States as children and have lived most of their lives here. The storytelling skills of PR pros can humanize the struggles of Dreamers and highlight the moral imperative of renewing or improving the act.

William J. Comcowich founded and served as CEO of CyberAlert LLC. He is currently Interim CEO of Glean.info. ○



William Comcowich



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Venture capital and PR: a perfect union

PR firms have begun strategically targeting the venture capital community in an effort to drum up business. But a competitive market makes the process of choosing a VC difficult. By Todd Barrish

Entering a partnership with a venture capital firm is a complex decision. In 2016, there were 898 venture firms in the United States alone. This competitive market makes choosing a VC difficult.

Entrepreneurs need to consider their investment strategy and search for investors with expertise in their market. Before agreeing to meet with a VC, the most promising entrepreneurs conduct meticulous due diligence by reading blogs, Tweets and articles. This poses a question: in venture capital — where everyone's money is just as green — how can your VC firm stand out?

VC marketing and PR trends

Over the past three years, venture capital firms have recognized an increasing need for marketing and PR. In 2014, an east coast team became the first venture firm in Boston to hire a Director of Platform. A Platform in venture capital is when investors offer resources to entrepreneurs beyond money and their partner's time and expertise. Directors of Platform oversee strategic internal and external initiatives like marketing and design to support portfolio companies and the local startup community.

From a strategic perspective, these hiring decisions make sense. Firms that dismiss the power of branding, risk competing solely on price, valuation and terms — not the most powerful differentiators.

Demonstrating credibility and capturing the personality of your partners requires intentional public relations efforts. So, what does effective PR look like for a top VC firm?

The power of PR in VC

Five years ago, Marc Andreessen and Ben Horowitz proved the power of branding and content marketing for VC firms. By engaging in aggressive marketing through blogs and Twitter, these two venture capitalists appealed directly to their target audience: top-tier entrepreneurs.

To strengthen the firm's PR efforts, Andreessen Horowitz hired Margit Wennmachers, founder of Outcast Communications. Wennmachers organized dinners with reporters and pitched story ideas to build a strong brand. These strategies were instrumental in establishing Andreessen Horowitz's credibility and consequent success. In three years, Andreessen Horowitz raised \$2.7 billion — more than any other venture capital firm in that same time span.

Horowitz isn't an isolated case. Some of the most successful VC firms have adopted integrated marketing and strategic PR

campaigns:

First Round Capital leveraged the power of Camille Ricketts, Head of Content and Marketing, to grow their new publication, *First Round Review*.

Jason Lemkin launched SaaStr Annual. Two years later, the event attracts over 10,000 attendees.

Mark Suster, angel investor and investment partner at Upfront Ventures, built his brand by creating content for entrepreneurs on Twitter and his blog, *Both Sides of the Table*.

Fred Wilson branded his firm, Union Square Ventures, through his AVC blog and Twitter.

The best VC firms use integrated marketing campaigns to build brands that are consistent and received by the firm's target market. From company publications to

events, blogs to Tweets, VC firms cannot dismiss the power of branding.

Early stage VC firms should outsource PR

While it may not make sense to hire a full-time Director of Platform as an early stage VC, investing in public relations is a smart move. VC firms that build strong brands, achieve several distinct advantages:

- Brand credibility can lead to enhanced deal flow.
- Platform offerings can be additional differentiators in an over-competitive market.
- Firms can achieve better deal terms and structures.
- Teams can leverage brand equity to attract and retain high caliber employees.

Companies tend to be most successful when they tie their vision and objectives to tangible communication strategies and tactics.

How can your firm benefit from integrated PR and strategic communications?

Todd Barrish founded and leads day-to-day operations at Indicate Media. ○

NAPS at 60, launches new products

North American Precis Syndicate is preparing a major celebration of its anniversary next year. By Jack O'Dwyer

Since January 1958, North American Precis Syndicate has distributed ready-to-use copy to newspapers. Its services have evolved to take advantage of technical developments and cope with the changing media landscape.

The most popular format now, said Dorothy York, CEO of the New York based company, is the CD version.

Digital formats are commonly used, including downloadable files on the www.napsnet.com site, RSS feeds by subject, e-mails, direct computer feeds, Twitter feeds, and Facebook and Pinterest posts.

Fortune 500 use NAPS

"Most" companies in the Fortune 500 use NAPS, she adds, not just because of its reach to the 1,330 dailies, but also because of its audience of 7,184 weekly community papers, 1,473 shoppers and 2,028 special dailies and school papers.

Daily/Sunday papers have a combined circulation of 38 million while weekly community papers are taken by 65 million.

Many dailies are now "hyper-local weeklies in the wealthy suburbs of major markets, the primary group of publications that we serve," said York. The suburban audience, York says, includes wealthy influencers such as civic and political leaders, business owners, executives, lawyers and doctors.

Typical corporate themes

Companies show how they serve the public interest by contributing to health, education, the needs of young people and the arts, said York. They build brand recognition and loyalty with stories of corporate social responsibility. A campaign can avert attacks or make them less damaging.

Disseminating corporate speeches can create additional coverage in major as well as suburban newspapers, she notes.

Goodwill can be obtained by showing a company's scientific and technological advances. "News of your progress on Main Street increases respect for your management and helps you win on Wall Street," said York.

Another communications goal is building corporate brand and identity. Let the media use your charts and statistics, says York. This helps create a more informed market assessment and enhances corporate image.

Winning in Washington is an important goal for companies, she adds. PR can help lobbyists by appealing to people at a grass roots level and mobilizing citizens who can send letters to legislators.

NAPS offers copy and layout suggestions at no cost or obligation. Free proposals are available from info@napsnet.com, or by calling 1-800-222-5551. ○



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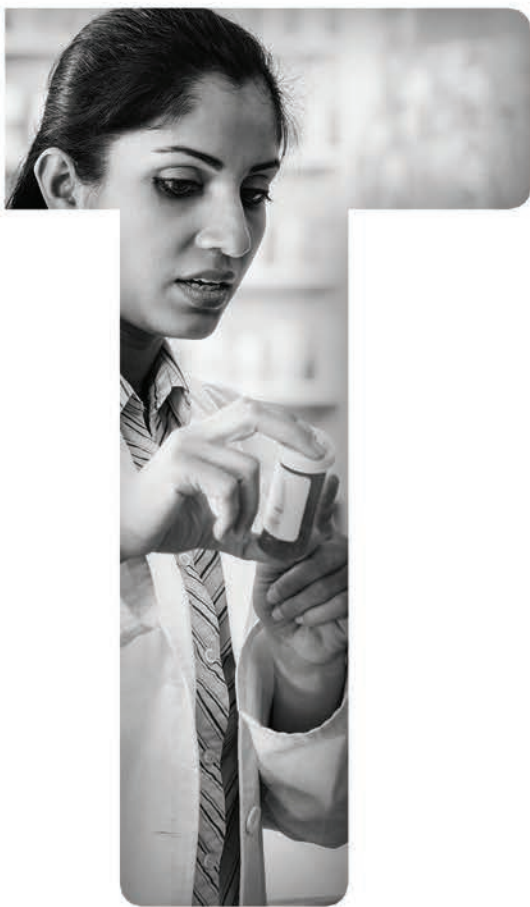


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is questioned.

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consumer indifference and
competitive disruption.

It's what our 600 health experts
help companies and brands earn
every day.

O'Dwyer's guide to HEALTHCARE COMMUNICATIONS

5W PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Ronn D. Torossian, President & CEO

Since 2003, New York City-based 5W Public Relations (5W) has worked with world-class and emerging brands, corporations, consumer companies, technology companies of all shapes and sizes, healthcare interests, regional businesses, non-profits, and high profile individuals to help them achieve their strategic public relations and marketing objectives across a broad range of interests.

5W practice areas include Consumer Brands, Food & Beverage, Health & Wellness, Travel & Hospitality, Technology, Beauty, Entertainment, Nonprofit, Corporate Communications and Reputation Management, Public Affairs, Crisis Communications, and digital strategy. Resourceful, innovative, and nimble, 5W works hard, thinks big, and delivers successful, game-changing results.

5W's team of 130 knowledgeable, tenacious, and passionate professionals understand how to leverage any story, and direct the conversation to your best advantage. We develop and execute novel and fresh ways for our clients to connect with their target audiences in memorable ways. As a result, we measurably increase the positive results of their communication efforts. Our diverse roster of client experience includes Sparkling ICE, Medifast, Walgreens/Duane Reade, DigitalOcean, KRUPS, Anheuser-Busch, Camp Bow Wow, L'Oreal, AEROSOLE, Jane Iredale, T-Fal, GoHealth, Zeta Interactive, and other publicly traded companies, consumer brands, technology companies, start-ups and personalities.

Our programs lead to award winning recognition, including PR Agency of the Year, PR Executive of the Year, Product Launch of the Year, Business to Business Program of the Year and Digital/Social Media Campaign of the Year, among others.

ADCOM HEALTHCARE

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Joe Kubic, CEO; **Craig Martin**, Senior Executive Vice President; **Don Szabo**, Vice President, Program Strategies; **Tara Stultz**, Vice President, Healthcare; **Kym Faerber**, Account Supervisor

Adcom, a leading PR, communications and marketing agency, builds meaningful relationships between our clients and their customers. For the past two decades, our Healthcare division has served as a strategic partner to key companies and organizations in the health system/hospital, health IT, payer, medical device and pharma space. Our team of highly experienced, senior-level professionals are passionate about healthcare. Adcom Healthcare includes strategists; operational experts; brand, audience and communications planners; marketing technologists; medical and business writers; creative directors and designers; videographers; web programmers and designers; meeting planners, and more. We understand the changing healthcare landscape and how to frame your brand's messaging, marketing, PR and thought leadership within the context of top-of-mind issues such as value-based care, population health, the growth of health IT, patient centrality, and the ever-changing regulatory environment. We offer the best of both worlds: The expertise of a healthcare-centric consultancy, within a truly full-service agency.

Clients include: Cleveland Clinic, HIMSS, Medtronic, Medical Mutual, Oscar Health, Steribite, Take Care Health Systems, Surgical Theater, Johnson & Johnson, Steris and Bayer.

BEEHIVE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

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Lisa Hannum, President & CEO
Becky McNamara, CFO
Nicki Gibbs, Senior Vice President
Ayme Zemke, Vice President

Beehive Strategic Communication is best known for fresh insights, creative strategies and positive connections that create enduring value for our clients.

We are inspired by the global movement toward purpose-driven businesses and are committed to using the power of communication to build better businesses for a better world. Our expertise includes research, communication strategy, brand positioning, employee engagement and internal communication, public relations, social and digital marketing, and crisis communication.

Our team of senior strategists and savvy specialists has extensive health care experience with brands including 3M, Arizant Healthcare, Arkray USA, Beaumont Health, Coloplast, HLT, Inc. and University of Minnesota Health.

BIOSECTOR 2

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Sauna Keough, Managing Director

Biosector 2 (B2) is a global healthcare communications agency that partners with visionary clients to deliver groundbreaking programs and improve the health of people's lives. For more than a decade, B2's experience as an agency spans virtually every category in the industry and drives strategic solutions for their clients.

B2 builds brands and grows markets for companies driving innovation across a variety of disease states, and our main goal is to create measurable behavior change for our clients' most important stakeholders. Our capabilities to deliver against this goal go beyond traditional public relations, incorporating issues management, digital & social media, corporate branding, research & analytics and

more. Our dynamic, insightful approach allows us to solve today's problems while uncovering tomorrow's opportunities.

Biosector 2 is part of Inventiv Health Communications, a collective of agencies working across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies for health and biopharmaceutical innovators seeking to accelerate brand performance. Together, we are part of INC Research/Inventiv Health (Nasdaq:INCR), the only fully integrated biopharmaceutical solutions organization. Our company, including a Contract Research Organization (CRO) and Contract Commercial Organization (CCO), is purpose-built to address new market realities where clinical and commercial share expertise, data and insights to accelerate biopharmaceutical performance. With more than 22,000 employees and the ability to support customers in more than 110 countries, our global scale and deep therapeutic alignment enables INC Research/Inventiv Health to help customers successfully navigate an increasingly complex environment. For more information on our Raleigh, N.C.-based company, visit research.com or inventivhealth.com.

BLAZE

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Matt Kovacs, President

BLAZE is the trusted partner of choice for lifestyle contender brands hungry for a real piece of the marketshare. BLAZE has been retained by a growing number of savvy clients who want integrated PR, influencer and social media strategies—and flawless execution. BLAZE senior level professionals play a hands-on, day-to-day role with clients. With more than two decades of relationships and a solid team founded in strategic approaches, BLAZE is adroit in advancing client objectives and nimble to the quick-changing pace of media technologies.

Clients include: BIOHM, Essential Eyebrow Solution, Melora Ma-

nuka, Omax Health, Transcend Recovery Community and youtheory

BLISS INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION

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Michael Roth, Partner & Healthcare Practice Leader
Vicky Aguiar, Vice President

The Bliss Healthcare Practice represents a mix of *Fortune* 500, established industry players and true disruptors that span the national and global healthcare industry — from healthcare services, healthcare providers, to life sciences companies, to health educators, administrators of health insurance, to advocates, and consumer health organizations. We offer end-to-end communications and marketing solutions that help our clients connect with stakeholders and influencers within the healthcare supply chain, and deliver compelling stories about the science, strategy or technology behind a company or product.

At Bliss, we know that every client has its own DNA — a unique culture and approach to working with its core constituencies and delivering critical messages in its own way. Bliss works directly with C-suite, marketing, medical and communications executives to cut to the heart of the matter. We gain alignment on their aspirations, identify solutions to create measurable behavior change for critical stakeholders and deliver tangible results. Our clients trust Bliss as a long-term partner to set a strategic communications path and execute new, creative ways to address their business challenges. Bliss Integrated Communication is truly “integrated.” Not just in name.

We offer social and digital solutions and have been immersed in this marketing component for years, but social/digital expertise is now considered table stakes. What sets us apart? Bliss is both horizontally and vertically integrated and excels at creating the best thought leadership campaigns, understanding of complex subjects such as Medicare and Medicaid or clinical trial monitoring, collaborating with internal and external communicators, building relationships with financial and business press while connecting with technical trade media, and crafting umbrella narratives that can cascade from within various levels of a company. Our

creative, proprietary approaches to strategic communications allows us to problem solve for our clients, while discovering unique and untapped opportunities.

Our capabilities include: Brand & visual identity, clinical trial recruitment/support, content marketing, crisis and issues management, internal communications, data and publication support, digital/social media strategy, disease awareness campaigns, issues management, measurement/CRM support, media relations and publicity, medical meeting support, online community management (including social), product approval/launch, SEO/SEM strategy, stakeholder and influencer mapping, website launches and website maintenance.

BOARDROOM COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

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Julie Talenfeld, CEO
Don Silver, COO

When healthcare professionals seek out the very best and brightest Florida PR and marketing experts, they count on Boardroom Communications (DBA BoardroomPR).

We are a full-service public relations and integrated marketing agency delivering results for many of Florida's top healthcare practices, hospitals, ACOs, insurers and surgical and medical device manufacturers. By utilizing a systematic approach to bridge new and traditional media, our clients have an edge in rising above Florida's highly competitive market.

For more than 25 years, clients have turned to BoardroomPR for creative solutions to increase visibility, establish credibility and ultimately grow their businesses. Our highly experienced team of former journalists, multimedia and web marketing specialists and senior marketers have more than 150 years of combined experience counseling physicians, practice administrators, healthcare and hospital CEOs and entrepreneurs. Services include media relations, press conferences, media training and crisis management, special event management, social media, website development and marketing (SEO and SEM), video production and new business development consulting.



CG Life is an integrated marketing communications agency focused on life sciences and healthcare.

We have offices in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, Tampa and Orlando. We have Florida covered for you!

CG LIFE

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Murad Sabzali, Founding Partner
Jeff Bergau, Founding Partner

CG Life provides creative, content, digital, marketing, media and public relations services to all sectors of the life sciences and healthcare markets, including biotechnology, chemistry, diagnostics, medical device, pharmaceutical and research. As those markets increasingly experience cross over, CG Life is perfectly positioned to help clients spanning these sectors to anticipate the best strategies for how to communicate and succeed in them.

Relatively speaking, life is short. As an organization, we are making a point to not waste it. Together, we can communicate ideas and innovation, do it well, have fun, and positively impact humanity in the process. That's what truly matters, at least until a black hole gobbles us all up.

CHAMBERLAIN HEALTHCARE PR

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Christie Anbar, Managing Director

At Chamberlain, we are passionate about translating science into

meaningful stories that inspire action. At the end of every day, if we have empowered consumers and providers to create better health outcomes, then we know we've done our job. That's why, for more than 20 years, our clients — from *Fortune* 500 pharmaceutical companies to small non-profit patient groups — have relied on us to communicate their information to the audiences that really matter.

Chamberlain offers a complete suite of communications services fully matched to today's technological and geographic realities. Our teams' experience ranges from digital and social media to corporate communications, to advocacy, data strategy and management and more.

Chamberlain is part of Inventiv Health Communications, a collective of agencies working across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies for health and biopharmaceutical innovators seeking to accelerate brand performance. Together, we are part of INC Research/inVentiv Health (Nasdaq:INCR), the only fully integrated biopharmaceutical solutions organization. Our company, including a Contract Research Organization (CRO) and Contract Commercial Organization (CCO), is purpose-built to address new market realities where clinical and commercial share expertise, data and insights to accelerate biopharmaceutical performance. With more than 22,000 employees and the ability to support customers in more than 110 countries, our global scale and deep therapeutic alignment enables INC Research/inVentiv Health to help customers successfully navigate an increasingly complex environment. For more information on our Raleigh, N.C.-based company, visit incresearch.com or inventivhealth.com.

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Andrea Dagger (NY), Lisa Waters (LA)

Chandler Chicco Agency (CCA) is a global team of healthcare communications specialists dedicated to helping clients solve their most complex challenges. Integrating an unmatched breadth of resources that enables a comprehensive, 360-degree approach, CCA serves clients that span the spectrum of healthcare from blockbusters to niche products; large pharma to emerging specialty companies; biotech to devices and diagnostics; healthcare technology, hospitals, non-profits and academic centers.

CCA sets the standard in delivering best-in-class communications in a collaborative, flexible environment where creativity reigns and clients come first. For 20 years, we have achieved this by bringing the right people to the table—healthcare professionals, thought leaders, advocates, patients and loved ones—and then building alliances, communities, and champions motivated to act.

CCA is part of inVentiv Health Communications, a collective of agencies working across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies for health and biopharmaceutical innovators seeking to accelerate brand performance. Together, we are part of INC Research/inVentiv Health (Nasdaq:INCR), the only fully integrated biopharmaceutical solutions organization. Our company, including a Contract Research Organization (CRO) and Contract Commercial Organization (CCO), is purpose-built to address new market realities where clinical and commercial share expertise, data and insights to accelerate biopharmaceutical performance. With more than 22,000 employees and the ability to support customers in more than 110 countries, our global scale and deep therapeutic alignment enables INC Research/inVentiv Health to help customers successfully navigate an increasingly complex environment. For more information on our Raleigh, N.C.-based company, visit incresearch.com or inventivhealth.com



Crosby's healthcare practice leadership: Joel Machak, Executive Creative Director; Denise Aube, Executive VP & Healthcare Practice Leader; and Raymond Crosby, President & CEO.

COOPERKATZ & COMPANY, INC.

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**Ralph Katz, Principal
Anne Green, President/CEO**

CooperKatz & Company is an award-winning agency combining a nuanced understanding of the fast-changing healthcare market with high-impact communications strategies. Our expertise extends across the healthcare ecosystem with experience supporting providers, payers, services, technology, non-profits and management consultancies.

Healthcare clients have included: Alliance to Advance Patient Nutrition, an interdisciplinary partnership to improve hospital outcomes (with Abbott Nutrition); Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; The Physicians Foundation, a non-profit supporting physician practice; CityMD, a growing network of urgent care centers; AHIMA (American Health Information Management Association); healthcare practices of top management consulting firms (Navigant, Capgemini Health and Noblis Center for Health Innovation); and Queens Vanguard Center of the National Children's Study. We also support consumer health and wellness initiatives.

CooperKatz capabilities include brand strategy, program development, communications and content strategy, digital / social engagement, media relations and more. Our Creative Services practice creates meetings, events, business presentations, video / multimedia elements and collateral materials.

CROSBY

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**Raymond Crosby, President
Denise Aube, Executive Vice President, Healthcare Practice Leader
Joel Machak, Executive Creative Director**

For more than 40 years, Crosby has helped healthcare clients Inspire Actions That Matter™ — actions that positively impact people's lives and make a real difference for individuals, families, and communities.

Crosby's Healthcare Practice serves hospitals and health systems, health plans, physician groups, technology and service providers, seniors housing, health advocacy groups and Federal government agencies.

Services include marketing research and planning, brand development, integrated communications programs, public relations, social media, community and multicultural outreach, digital marketing, content marketing, PSAs, and behavior-change campaigns.

Crosby ranks among the top health communications agencies in the country. Clients include Kaiser Permanente, American Kidney Fund, Saint Agnes Hospital, Military OneSource, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Social Security Administration, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Sagepoint Senior Living Services, Quality Health Strategies, Veterans Health Administration, and the U.S. Preventive Services

Task Force. Crosby has offices in Annapolis, Md., and Washington, D.C.

CROSSWIND MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Thomas Graham, President & CEO

Ranked consistently among the top health care agencies in Texas and nationwide, Crosswind helped Texas win the largest federal medical research contract in the state's history, introduced some of the world's top pharmaceutical brands to Texas, and are bringing some of the nation's most promising new biosciences and technologies to market. Whether it's corporate affairs, senior executive positioning, crisis and issues management, thought leadership, digital & social media, employee communications, government & public affairs, investor & financial relations, market intelligence, marketing, media relations, trade shows & special events, our team has the deep experience to protect and advance brands and leadership reputation in top tier media worldwide.

Our home is Texas, but our reach is global. We hold a fierce commitment to our clients, still do business on a handshake, and occasionally, wear boots to our meetings. We serve corporations, public agencies and national governments across 5 continents. Our brand is based on the most important of today's currencies: Trust. Because, where we're from, your word is your bond.

DODGE COMMUNICATIONS

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**Brad Dodge, President
Chowning Johnson, Executive Vice President, Account Management
Elisabeth Deckon, Senior Vice President, Operations**

With offices in Atlanta and Boston, Dodge Communications is a leading full service digital PR, marketing and advertising agency.

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YOU CAN GET SERIOUS ABOUT BUILDING VALUE (OR YOU CAN TURN THE PAGE)

Let's talk about building and protecting the value of your company.

Whether you're being punished by short sellers, activists, or the media or you're one move away from elevating your business to the next level, success or failure almost always hinges on perception.

We get it, because we live it every day.

We're ICR: a strategic communications and advisory firm built around senior teams of sector specialized experts; professionals who are as serious about building and protecting value as you are.

And all of our teams bring a highly unique perspective to complex issues given our backgrounds as sell-side analysts, investment bankers, communications agency veterans and members of the media. We understand issues, metrics, peers and perceptions like no other firm.

Ready to finally hire the right firm to maximize your reputation and corporate value? Please visit our website at www.icrinc.com.





Finn Partners helped Operation Smile activate a youth-focused movement to advocate for safe surgery worldwide.

DODGE COMMUNICATIONS

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Since our founding in 2001, Dodge has been a trusted partner to over 300 companies in the healthcare, finance, biotech and life sciences industries. Made up of a team of 140 employees, we are experts at developing and executing tightly integrated campaigns under time crunches and in highly regulated, rapidly changing markets. Dodge helps clients of all sizes develop effective strategies and touchpoints to raise brand awareness, cultivate relationships and bring about desired actions.

EDELMAN

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Kym White, Global Chair, Health Sector

At Edelman, we understand that evolving, promoting and protecting health – for individuals, organizations and the world at large – requires deep expertise in the health sector as well as the discipline of communications marketing. We bring to bear a nuanced understanding that health is universal. It crosses all borders and unites a wide array of audiences in its quest. Health isn't simply an industry, but an issue critical to society worldwide.

Edelman Health clients represent virtually all aspects of the sector – pharma, life sciences, government, hospital and providers, retailers, wellness, NGOs, associations and others – and this diversity of experience ensures our big picture view on health. We understand the complexities that live at the intersection of science, medicine, behavior, business, economics and policy, and use multiple channels to help our clients tell their stories, build trust-based relationships and

inspire action.

Our 600+ health specialists around the world stay at the leading edge of critical medical, science, business and societal issues. By using data-driven insight to navigate the intertwined needs of our stakeholders, we capitalize on today's communications channels to ensure that health is everybody's business. Contact Kym White, Global Chair, Health Sector: kym.white@edelman.com.

FINN PARTNERS

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Partner/Singapore

Navigating an ever-changing health landscape requires experience and foresight. Finn Partners, with the fastest-growing Health Practice in the U.S., offers a bold vision and expertise in delivering real-world, innovative solutions for payer, provider, patient advocacy, health policy and product-innovation clients. We're known for elevating healthcare dialogue and stakeholder engagement to advance patient health and access-to-care. All with amazing results.

Tapped as one of "the Nation's Best Health Agencies" by *The Holmes Report*, we leverage our collaborative spirit to advance client goals – to improve consumer health and wellbeing. With more than 500 PR professionals around the world, we offer health-sector depth and cutting-edge expertise in corporate social responsibility, public affairs advocacy, market research, and digital, social and traditional media.

Finn Partners is best known for its work in changing the lives of people with pressing life challenges – from introducing new medicines and technologies that improve and extend life, to saying No More to domestic violence; from inspiring pancreatic cancer advocacy with Let's Win, to making Michiganders healthier; and from raising awareness around the dangers of obesity to working to end childhood cancers.

Finn Partners' more than 60 health clients include a wide range of health product and service innovators across pharmaceuticals, medical devices, health tech, patient advocacy and professional associations, including Abbott, Amarin, Aralez, BioTelemetry, Celularity, Centerstone, Clarity, EarlySense, Epstein Becker Green, Equashield, The Galien Foundation, LifePoint Health, The Lustgarten Foundation, NuSirt Biopharma, Seal Software, Sterling Partners and Veterans Healthcare, plus several top five pharmaceutical companies and some of the country's largest payer systems. From medical innovations to breakthrough health/tech to services that improve care, all our clients focus on the most important part of the health system – patients.

GCI HEALTH

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Wendy Lund, CEO

GCI Health is an award-winning integrated communications agency designed for and inspired by the ever-changing face of healthcare. Our passion is to uncover the most effective and breakthrough ways to put patients first, to tackle our clients' largest opportunities and challenges and drive commercial success. We have a long-standing reputation for excellent client service, breakthrough programming, results that exceed expectations and providing forward-thinking thought leadership in today's evolving, of-

ten volatile healthcare landscape. Our client roster spans across all sectors, including pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical technology, consumer health, payer, provider, health technology, beauty and aesthetics and non-profit. We provide a deep focus in multichannel marketing, science and innovation, consumer activation, crisis management, reputation building, corporate responsibility, patient advocacy and health education.

We are guided by our mantra of "Let's Do Something Different" for our clients, colleagues and the community, and our culture is built around the inspiration to push the boundaries of what is possible. At GCI Health, we craft messages and choose the most appropriate channels that break through for our clients. Through our innovative approach to communications, clients always remain focused on why they chose GCI Health in the first place... improving people's health and wellness.

GREENOUGH

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Phil Greenough, Founder & CEO
Jamie Parker, President

From clinician and patient engagement programs to brand journalism targeting payers and the hospital C-suite, our programs deliver results. What's different about our approach, however, is that it starts with capturing our audiences' invaluable outside-in perspectives.

Our unique form of brand journalism spreads storytelling across earned, owned and paid channels. We align the stories health systems, practices, payers and healthcare technology providers want to tell with the needs of their audiences: this ensures highly relevant, contextual and authentic stories.

Our brand journalism "reporting" uncovers standalone stories and perspectives that routinely appear in *Modern Healthcare*, *Becker's* and other trade media. It leads to expert commentary in healthcare stories in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *Good Morning America*. And it uncovers angles for highly targeted local and hyperlocal media that drive specific audience actions.

Our current campaigns range from FDA-compliant patient communications programs through traditional and social media to lead-generation programs that

strategically target health system stakeholders, clinicians and patients alike. Many programs are supported by our Brand Journalism Research: this features proprietary surveys and focus groups that uncover original insights to measurably break through a noisy content landscape.

Lastly, our brand journalism approach enlists relevant patient advocacy organizations, clinician and nursing societies and associations and industry experts. Through our clinician/patient management system, we strategically engage with KOL specialists and their patients to routinely secure placements across online, print and broadcast media.

HAGER SHARP

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Jennifer Wayman, MHS,
President & CEO

Hager Sharp is an integrated marketing communications agency committed to improving health, advancing education, transforming our communities and making meaningful change in the world. We work with leading businesses, government agencies and nonprofits to create and execute award-winning ideas that make a difference. For more than 40 years, we've been dedicated to providing insightful counsel, devising creative solutions, and achieving shared goals. Hager Sharp is home to some of the finest strategists, researchers, creative specialists, media experts, and public health professionals in the industry. If you and your organization are motivated to improve the world through communications and marketing, come to Hager Sharp. Current health clients include: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Eye Institute; HHS Office on Women's Health; National Cancer Institute's President's Cancer Panel; FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, FDA's Center for Tobacco Products, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, the American Cancer Society, and the CDC Foundation.

HEALTH UNLIMITED

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Timothy Bird, Global CEO
Julia Jackson, Exec. VP
Karen O'Malley, President,
Corkery Group Unlimited

Health Unlimited is a global health consultancy and communications agency built by specialist agencies with a legacy of advancing landmark developments in challenging, hard to treat health conditions. For more than 25 years we have been driving results for companies and organizations invested in solving the world's most complex and challenging health issues.

Health Unlimited US includes:

- Cooney Waters Unlimited pushes creative boundaries to deliver innovative marketing communications approaches across therapeutic areas and health sectors. Celebrating our 25th anniversary, we are passionate about scientific innovation, breakthrough medicines and technologies, and creating ground-breaking coalitions to improve patient care.

- Corkery Group Unlimited specializes in issues-oriented strategic communications to improve human health. Through our expertise in issue-oriented communications, we help our clients achieve their long-term corporate, public health and advocacy goals.

HILL + KNOWLTON STRATEGIES

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This may seem odd to say in an issue dedicated to Healthcare PR, but it's hard to know just what that term means. For our interdisciplinary team, "Healthcare PR" means understanding the complex interplay of science, medicine, policy, payment, and behavior that impacts health. It means using media that's digital and social, paid, earned, owned and anything in between to communicate a story that's immediate, gripping, and vibrant.

In fact, "Healthcare" is far too limiting a term to describe what we do, since the spectrum of inputs that shape a person's health



David Bowen, Global Lead, Health & Wellness at H+K Strategies



Hunter PR invited editors to move and dance with new BAND-AID® Brand SKIN-FLEX Adhesive Bandages - creating a unique interactive experience that not only introduced the brand's new STICK WITH IT™ positioning but also allowed a creative way for editors to put the new flexible product to the test.

extend way beyond the confines of medical care. Our phones, our wristbands, and everyday objects around our house are part of wellness, as is our network of friends, family and trusted advisors. Our job as communications professionals is nothing less than understanding this complex ecosystem of information and channeling it to promote positive outcomes.

HUNTER PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Practice Leader: **Shari Schnall**
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Hunter Public Relations is an award-winning consumer products public relations firm with offices in New York and London and a strategic footprint in markets across North America. Beginning with research-driven insights, Hunter executes strategic public relations programs that build equity, increase engagement and drive measurable business results for branded consumer products. A powerful blend of content marketing, media relations, social and digital media, influencer engagement, and events and experiences engages the hearts, minds and spirits of target consumers.

With consumers facing more health and wellness choices than ever, Hunter Public Relations' Consumer Health practice breaks through the clutter by identifying key insights to engage them practically and emotionally, leading to

brand loyalty and increased sales. Specialized services (entertainment marketing, social & digital media and Hispanic strategies) inform our 360-degree approach, seamlessly integrating brand messaging into consumers' busy lifestyles, keeping our clients' products and services top of mind when consumers need them most.

In partnership with some of the world's most respected consumer health companies including Johnson & Johnson and Church & Dwight, Hunter PR has worked with brands across the health and wellness sector including oral care, eye care, allergy, women's health, pain, and wound care, to digestive health, vitamins, supplements, weight-loss, bariatrics, and heart health. Most recently, Hunter PR won PRSA's Silver Anvil award for the Top Healthcare PR Campaign of the Year for Zyrtec: A Case of Allergy Face and three PRSA Big Apple Awards for VIS-INE®: #ScreenOn and MOTRIN® Make It Happen Weekends.

ICR, INC.

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Within the rapidly changing healthcare environment, ICR Healthcare has the agility and ability to quickly provide strategic and targeted services to address our clients' most pressing needs and goals. Whether you are an emerging start-up or a multinational Fortune 500 company, we deliver and execute on thoughtful and results-driven communications plans that help raise awareness of your company

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ICR

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and products, inform clinical and investment decision making and influence health policy.

Whether the emphasis is on corporate, scientific and marketing communications, or public affairs, we understand that every client is different, and so too, is their story. With a clear understanding of the many complex dynamics and influencers within our healthcare system, ICR takes a hands-on approach to understand both the science and the sentiment behind your business, ensuring that your message goes beyond simple clarity, to resonate and make a lasting impression with the audiences that matter most to you.

INVENTIV HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS

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Lisa Stockman, President,
Communications

inVentiv Health Communications is a purpose-built collective of agencies focused on supporting health and biopharmaceutical innovators. We work in scalable, collaborative teams that partner across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies that accelerate brand performance. In today's fast-changing and complex environment, success lies in making connections: between science, emotion, and technology; between data, design and human insight. We're able to make those connections because our advertising, public relations, medical communications, digital, data science, research and market access specialists work closely with each other and with healthcare experts, including physicians, pharmacists and advocates. Together, we are the connected healthcare partner tapping rich insights to drive innovation, change behavior and pioneer a new era of accountable marketing.

inVentiv Health Communications is powered by INC Research/inVentiv Health (Nasdaq:INCR), the only fully integrated biopharmaceutical solutions organization. Our company, including a Contract Research Organization (CRO) and Contract Commercial Organization

(CCO), is purpose-built to address new market realities where clinical and commercial share expertise, data and insights to accelerate biopharmaceutical performance. With more than 22,000 employees and the ability to support customers in more than 110 countries, our global scale and deep therapeutic alignment enables INC Research/inVentiv Health to help customers successfully navigate an increasingly complex environment. For more information on our Raleigh, N.C.-based company, visit incresearch.com or inventivhealth.com.

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Based in Nashville, Tenn., with an office in Chicago, Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock, Inc. is a U.S. top 10 strategic communications firm for the nation's leading healthcare providers experiencing significant change, challenge or opportunity. Founded in 2006, the firm has worked with more than 300 clients in more than 40 states and served as a communications advisor on more than \$45 billion in announced M&A and partnership transaction communications. A proven strategy leader, Jarrard Inc. delivers tightly focused issue management campaigns and long-term transformational initiatives designed to advance healthcare providers' most important goals. For more information, visit jarrardinc.com or follow us @JarrardInc

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At JPA Health Communications, we live and breathe science, patient advocacy and healthcare communications. We are an award-win-

ning PR agency known for crafting targeted, high-impact programs for biotech/pharma, device and diagnostics, providers and nonprofit clients.

JPA senior leadership has deep industry experience and thrive in navigating the complexities presented in health public relations. Through our influencer relations model, our team uses a proprietary, targeted approach to reach the stakeholders who drive change and engage others within their reach. We have a strong track record of generating positive media coverage, through carefully cultivated relationships with journalists at national and regional newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations, and online publications, as well as trade outlets.

JPA is a leader in designing health campaigns that drive change and deliver measurable results. We invite you to learn more by contacting one of our offices in Washington, DC, Boston, San Francisco and London.

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Meet the Senior Leadership Team at LaVoieHealthScience—Specialized Thinkers Providing Strategic, Integrated Communications to Health Science Clients Worldwide.

Named America's #1 Healthcare PR Agency (Ragan's Ace Awards), San Francisco-based Landis Communications Inc. (LCI) represents healthcare organizations not just in California, but nationally and globally as well. With more than 25 years in business, award-winning LCI provides integrated PR, digital, social media, branding and marketing strategies that work. Our healthcare clients include: University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) Medical Center, Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford, Johnson & Johnson, Global Alzheimer's Platform, Merck, Brain Health Registry, Planned Parenthood, OnLok Senior Health Services, Crestwood Behavioral Health and more. For your healthcare public relations needs, please visit LCI online at: www.landispr.com. For further information, please contact Ms. Brianne Miller, Business Development Manager, LCI: brianne@landispr.com or call us at: 415/561-0888.

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LaVoieHealthScience provides integrated public and investor relations to build recognition, sales, and value for health science innovations. Our health science expertise uniquely positions us to help clients make their health and science innovations known, understandable, and approachable to customer audiences through carefully executed strategies and plans. Our vision is to apply industry-tested counsel and pragmatic execution through our highly experienced and trained professionals.

The agency has received 29 awards over the past eight years in recognition of the work it has done for emerging and established industry leaders in life sciences, pharmaceuticals, health, and gov-

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LAVOIEHEALTHSCIENCE

Continued from page 62

ernment. We bring 16 years of case studies and over 300 proven strategies to our clients. We are focused on building trust and long-term relationships based on the quality of the work that we deliver. Many of our client relationships are a decade or more long.

Clients include: BioAxxone Bio-Sciences, Inc.; Biotechnology Innovation Organization; Fusion Pharmaceuticals LLC; Hydra Bio-sciences, Inc.; Imara, Inc.; Iota Biosciences, Inc.; Integrity Applications, Inc.; Landos Biopharma, Inc.; LaunchWorks Inc.; LEO Science & Tech Hub (Leo Pharma, Inc.); MicroPort Orthopedics, Inc.; NewLink Genetics Inc.; Newron Pharmaceuticals, SpA; Origenis GmbH; Oticon USA; SIRION Bio-tech GmbH; Torrey Partners; Xontogeny, LLC and WuXiAppTec.

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At Lazar Partners, we don't just deliver your message; we catalyze the connections that drive business results and enhance your reputation. Our clients count on us to deliver proactive strategic recommendations as well as flawless execution. For the last 16 years, private and public companies have benefited from our proven approaches to strengthening relationships with healthcare professionals, patients, third-party organizations, the financial community, the media and business partners. Our commitment to clients is to forge trusting connections that build brand equity, increase goodwill and grow shareholder value.

Yet even companies with great reputations sometimes find themselves facing challenging situations that can harm their brand and we stand with you to manage and overcome crisis situations.

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Ken Makovsky, President & CEO
Susan Goldstein, Partner, Chief Strategy Officer and MD of Health
Rob Schachter, EVP, Health Deputy

Named "Healthcare Agency of the Year" by *The Holmes Report*, the veteran Makovsky team is passionate about making a positive impact on outcomes for patients served by biotech, pharmaceutical, mHealth, NGO, med-tech and health services clients. Strategy and planning expertise spans across: pre-launch, approval, launch, corporate, advocacy, employee engagement, social, digital, media relations, issues and integrated communications.

The senior bench at Makovsky has deep expertise in driving significant ROI for categories including: oncology, cardiovascular, metabolic, opioid, immunology, CNS, rare diseases, vaccines, GI, women's health and hematology. The team has achieved many innovative "firsts" for market leader clients across social platforms and digital channels. The team brings a deep knowledge of how to calibrate and shape messaging with audiences across the HC continuum, including patients, caregivers, consumers, advocates, social influencers, KOLs, community physicians, payors and policymakers.

The practice has received more than 20 creative industry and corporate awareness programs, brand communications and disease education awards, including "Best in Healthcare," "Best Education/Public Service Campaign" and "Best of the Best" PR campaign across all industry sectors. Makovsky has also been named "Mid-Size Agency of the Year" and "Best Place to Work," adding to a robust collection of more than 200 awards over the years.

Select Makovsky healthcare clients include: Becton Dickinson, BMJ (formerly the British Medical Journal), Galien Foundation, GlaxoSmithKline, and The Jed Foundation.

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Marketing Maven represents healthcare companies in all stages of growth, whether preparing to



Lindsey Carnett, CEO and President of Marketing Maven at United Nations General Session in NYC representing Global Goal number six: clean water and sanitation on behalf of client WaterAid America.

launch a new product or aiming to increase awareness of an existing product or service. Our team approach utilizes our wide scope of in-house resources including graphic design, copywriting, social media and Hispanic marketing. Proficient in corporate positioning, organic search engine optimization, reputation management, media relations and the creation of branded marketing collateral, Marketing Maven helps guide their clients with effective communications strategies designed to produce a positive ROI.

Marketing Maven is familiar with regulatory standards and protects their clients by ensuring content is compliant with approved claims and language. They adapt approved claims into concise media messaging, and gain positive media exposure through targeted outreach. Our team works with the healthcare industry to generate positive media coverage, improve and sustain a positive public reputation, and help clients become partners and members of the community.

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For more than three decades, MCS has remained a constant fixture in an ever-changing media marketplace by adapting and in-

novating as rapidly as the science itself. As an independent specialty shop solely focused on healthcare, we think of ourselves as a swift boat among battleships: small but sturdy; nimble and reliable; and best-suited for operations that are difficult, demanding and unique.

Together, we turn strategy and creativity to action, resulting in solutions that specifically, comprehensively and robustly address your current needs. We are experts in all facets of communications, including digital; social media; and paid, owned and earned channels. As your partners, we will bring new integrated ideas and real solutions to the table, and feel empowered to raise our hand when we have an idea on how to improve your business.

We take measurement seriously. We evaluate impact and proactively answer the questions, "so what?" and "what now?"

We are a highly collaborative bunch that believes in the pollination of ideas across all brand communications. We welcome the opportunity to partner with your creative agencies, co-marketers and cross-functional colleagues to deliver results more efficiently and with a holistic vision of the brand's success.

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Merritt Group is an award-winning integrated communications agency with offices in Washington, DC and San Francisco. Our team is comprised of 50+ professionals including PR practitioners, social media experts, digital/interactive strategists, researchers, marketers, content creators, designers and videographers. We work hand-in-hand with clients ranging from *Fortune* 500 industry leaders to early-stage health technology companies to deliver measurable, high-impact campaigns that reach, influence and activate decision-makers.

Our expertise spans health IT and life science innovators, providers, insurance networks, not-for-profits, academic institutions and advocacy groups. For more than 10 years, we have worked with leading and emerging brands including Avizia, MedGenome, Innovation Health, Amazing Charts, Heritage Provider Network, MAXIMUS and US Pharmacopeia. We sit at the intersection of healthcare and IT and understand the significant impact technologies such as big data, analytics, AI, IoT, and cybersecurity bring to the healthcare industry.

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Betsy Merryman, Managing Partner

Merryman Communications works closely with healthcare clients ranging from start-ups to *Fortune* 500 companies as a strategic partner in integrated marketing, communications, public relations and digital marketing. We are a full-service agency, and we offer a wide range of capabilities and special expertise to ensure we have all a client's needs covered. The Merryman Communications team has worked across virtually all healthcare industry categories and therapeutic areas, including medical devices and diagnostics, biotech and pharmaceuticals, health IT, health plans, hospitals and physician groups/IPAs and nonprofits. We're based in Los Angeles and have team members around the country. We're all seasoned veterans of global advertising and PR agencies, so we offer big agency know-how but with a boutique, specialty agency touch. Our virtual model helps your budgets go fur-

ther, and you can rely on us to help you flourish.

MOORE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

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Moore Communications Group is a nationally-ranked integrated communications firm headquartered in Tallahassee, Florida. Blending smart strategy with creative collaboration, we use integrated communications campaigns to build brands. Our tailored marketing solutions are custom curated from a mix of more than 12 services and specialties including advocacy, digital, social and Latino communications that shape opinions, shift behaviors and incite action, connecting our clients to success.

Connecting is at the heart of what the Moore Communications Group team does for our clients. These connections power business success, greater profits, brand identity and strategic outcomes. We understand promises matter. It's quite simple. If you deliver what you promise to people you will matter to them. We promise to connect you to a new level of business success.

For more information about Moore Communications Group, visit www.moorecommgroup.com

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MWWPR leverages more than 30 years of healthcare experience to put "care" back at the center of healthcare. We make science, care and innovation accessible

to patients, doctors, partners and caregivers by improving the relationship between healthcare professionals and patients while shaping environments to be receptive to new ways for delivering care.

Effective healthcare communications takes into account a complex, nuanced system that balances science and the provision of care with consumer perceptions, provider realities, technology, business and politics. Numerous stakeholders with divergent needs and agendas must be managed to meet the ultimate goal of bringing state-of-the-art solutions to today's sophisticated medical, business and policy needs.

From patient advocacy organizations and public health institutions to biotech and medical technology business, MWWPR has expertise in positioning scientific and medical organizations to meet the varied needs of each group's diverse constituencies. Our integrated practice allows our public affairs and crisis experts to work seamlessly with healthcare on regulatory issues and the changing payer landscape. Our strategic approach begins with identifying the expectations of the organization and developing approaches to meet their goals. Our work has ranged from developing communications platforms to igniting grassroots activism to ensuring funding for research in specific areas of medicine, to rallying member support for policy initiatives that would change how healthcare professionals are reimbursed for services.

PADILLA

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Padilla is a top 10 independent public relations and communications company comprised of 240 employee-owners. Padilla builds, grows and protects brands worldwide by creating purposeful connections with the people who matter most through public relations, advertising, digital and social marketing, investor relations and brand strategy. Padilla includes the brand consultancy of Joe Smith, the food and nutrition experts at FoodMinds and the research authorities at SMS.

Clients include 3M, Barnes & Noble College, Bayer, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Be The Match, Blood Centers of

America, Cargill Inc., GE, Land O'Lakes, Mayo Clinic, Rockwell Automation, SanBio, SeaSpine, Seqirus (a CSL Company), VCU Medical Center and Welch's, among others.

Padilla's Health team consists of seasoned health and science strategists spanning the health care ecosystem, specializing in:

- pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies
- device makers, vaccine manufacturers
- hospital and health systems
- insurers, payor groups
- nonprofits, government

Padilla is a founding member of The Worldcom Public Relations Group, a partnership of 143 independently owned partner offices in 115 cities on six continents. Make a connection at PadillaCo.com.

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PAN Communications is a data-focused integrated marketing & PR agency servicing B2B technology and healthcare brands. With offices in Boston, San Francisco, NYC and Orlando, PAN delivers insight-driven, measurable public relations programs for leading and emerging brands nationally and globally such as SAP, RSA, MediaMath, Maestro Health and Fuze, to name a few.

With a staff of 100+ professionals, PAN offers the agility and personalized service of a mid-size agency while leveraging national and international relationships to manage large scale communications programs. The agency continues to experience impressive growth and provides today's modern marketers with impactful communications, influencer relations, social media and digital services that continue to expand on its brand equity.

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Mike Friedman, Chief Digital officer

Peppercomm is an award-winning strategic, integrated communications and marketing agency headquartered in New York City with offices in San Francisco and London. The firm connects brands, messages and people through data-driven insights, cross-channel communications and brilliant customer experience. Employing an omni-channel approach, the company uses customer insights to determine the right mix of tools and platforms to help clients reach, engage and influence customers along their path to purchase.

Founded in 1995, Peppercomm has received numerous accolades, including *The Holmes Report's* North American Corporate/B2B Agency of the Year and *Bulldog Reporter's* Midsize Agency of the Year. The agency has been listed as one of *Fortune's* 10 Best Workplaces in Advertising and Marketing, 100 Best Workplaces for Women, 50 Best Small and Medium Workplaces and 50 Best Workplaces for New College Grads.

Services include Branding, Content Strategy & Development, Creative Services, Crisis Management, Digital Solutions, Experiential, Insights & Strategy, Licensing, Public Relations & Social Media and Research & Measurement.

For more information, visit www.peppercomm.com

The November issue of *O'Dwyer's* will profile technology PR firms. If you would like to be profiled, contact Editor Jon Gingerich at 646/843-2080 or jon@odwyerpr.com

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Perry Communications Group is an award-winning, full service strategic communications firm. Led by Kassy Perry, PCG shapes ideas, galvanizes opinions and influences decisions ultimately leading to social change. The PCG team helps clients positively impact public policy issues not only in Sacramento, but throughout California and the U.S. PCG tackles high-profile issues such as health care, energy and environment, finance and water.

Whether the politically savvy PCG team is managing a complicated issue, running a statewide initiative campaign, leading a high-profile coalition or helping clients communicate, shape and influence with a mix of traditional and digital strategies, we achieve success by building strong relationships with policymakers, the media and corporate influencers. We excel at working with local and state governments. Since the company's founding, we have worked with *Fortune* 500 companies, major industry associations and charitable organizations.

PCG provides services for an array of clients including: Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers of America, Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation, Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, California Association of Health Underwriters, My Patient Rights, California Chronic Care Coalition, West Health, CMTA

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Amy Power, Founder & CEO
Sam Davis, Dir., Client Development

We believe in powerful stories. At The Power Group, we live by this mantra every day. Established in 1999 by Amy Power, our roots remain in public relations but we have since expanded to include digital services. We work with a wide variety of clients in an array of industries including: healthcare, food and beverage, technology, franchising, and commercial real estate among others. Every employee at The Power Group strives to live by our core values: do the right thing, win together and create happiness and fun. These three values drive our paths to success both internally as collaborators and externally with clients. Ultimately, our aim is to be forward-thinking, collaborative and safeguards of our clients' brands.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS INC.

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Team members at Public Communications Inc. are passionate about healthcare. We create communication solutions for national and international healthcare clients in every sector. Healthcare communications is at the core of our national, independent agency, which boasts nearly five decades of healthcare experience.

PCI consistently delivers award-winning programs and campaigns for clients ranging from advocacy organizations and medical and allied health associations to Fortune 100 corporations; pharma, device manufacturers, biotechs and hospital suppliers; hospitals and health systems; retail; accrediting agencies; payers and consultants. PCI also knows healthcare audiences first-hand. We understand what makes them tick, how to reach them, and know the words that will resonate and prompt engagement.

Healthcare represents more than half of PCI's business. Our clients include more than 25 medical and dental associations, start-ups looking for visibility and university health systems. We launch products and manage lifecycle commu-

nications; run consumer awareness and screening programs on a turn-key basis; develop professional relations campaigns designed to draw referrals; and develop digital media strategies, campaigns and platforms including efficient online newsrooms and content-rich websites.

More than a third of our healthcare clients have stayed with us 10 years or more with several exceeding 20-year partnerships. Our success grows from truly listening to, and talking with, our clients. We then create solutions and deliver quality service and results that meet or exceed our clients' goals.

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Larry Weber, Chairman & Founder
Peter Prodromou, President & Chief Executive Officer
Ani Jigarjian, VP, Global Marketing & Business Development

Racepoint Global combines the power of worldwide reach with personal attention. Our clients expect everything to be bigger, better and bolder. They also want access to the brightest minds at all times. We have the necessary DNA to do both. We challenge our clients to do more to stay ahead and demand that they challenge us to be accountable. We drive communications that are strategically sound and strive to forge personal relationships, breakthrough results and lasting impact. Racepoint Global delivers big agency results with a small agency touch.

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Rasky Partners is a nationally recognized public and government relations firm with nearly three decades of experience providing exceptional client service to healthcare organizations that operate at the intersection of business, politics and media.

With offices in Boston and Washington, D.C., Rasky Partners offers a comprehensive range of services including media strategy and pub-

lic relations, government relations, reputation management, crisis communication and digital media to healthcare clients that include hospital systems, insurers, medical device and life sciences companies, nonprofits and advocacy organizations.

As an independent firm, Rasky Partners has the flexibility and resources to address complex communications challenges with a commitment to serve our clients' interests first. We are dedicated to providing consistent, strategic hands-on engagement at all levels, as each client team – including the senior professionals – is highly engaged, from the beginning to the end of each client engagement.

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John Quinn, Executive Vice President & Healthcare Practice Leader

Srikant Ramaswami, Executive Vice President, Global and Emerging Markets, Healthcare

rbb Communications is an integrated marketing communications firm with several Agency of the Year title wins. As a champion of Breakout Brands™, rbb inspires companies with insights on creating customer passion to increase sales.

From global pharmaceutical and healthcare product launches to market-specific issues management and patient advocacy campaigns, rbb's Healthcare Practice develops breakout campaigns for clients that raise awareness, drive engagement and action. Whether a healthcare business requires support in the United States or in Latin/South America, Europe, the Middle East & Africa or Asia Pacific, rbb has the industry knowledge and global reach to deliver results. We have nurtured a sensitivity toward other cultures, attitudes, behaviors and ideas, and understand the drivers and barriers for good healthcare in specific markets. Our expertise covers the gamut – hospital, long-term care, home care and hospice systems, health plans, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, OTC/consumer health, retailers, global public health issues, rare diseases, and NGOs.

Other rbb specialty practices include consumer products/services,

food & beverage, travel & leisure, higher education, professional services, entertainment and real estate. rbb's family of brands offer media relations, digital marketing, influencer engagement, corporate communications, social media management and creative services/advertising. With offices in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, New Jersey and Los Angeles, the firm also has an international reach that extends across more than 100 cities in 50 countries through its partnership with PROI Worldwide, the largest global network of independent communications agencies. To learn more, visit www.rbbcommunications.com or call (305) 448-7450.

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Full service communications for health, medical, science, and social issues: Message development and testing, audience insight interviews, science promotion, clinical trial recruitment, public education campaigns, media relations, issues management, thought leadership, digital and social media, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy promotion.

The Reis Group is a Washington-DC based public relations agency focused on health and social causes. We are passionate about our clients' issues and believe in the power of communications to transform lives.

Working closely and collaboratively with our clients, we develop tailored campaigns to meet their needs and produce measurable and meaningful results – every time. Representing leading foundations, associations, coalitions, health systems, corporations, and universities, we offer clients a team of talented, experienced public relations professionals who provide original thinking, a depth of knowledge, and proven successes in health, healthcare, and science communications.

Our goal is to provide every client with the skills and capabilities of a specialized agency, along with the commitment and dedication of a small business.

Partial client list includes: American Gastroenterological Association, Banner Alzheimer's Institute,



The Reis Group team celebrated their one-year anniversary with a month-long celebration that honored clients, team, and community.

Blue Shield of California Foundation, Digestive Disease Week, Duke Integrative Medicine, EAB, Nemours Children's Health System, Society for Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America and Society of Interventional Radiology.

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Brandon Edwards, CEO

ReviveHealth, a Weber Shandwick company, is a full-service agency operating at the intersection of healthcare delivery, finance, and innovation. We know the business of healthcare inside and out. We anticipate and solve complex challenges. We recognize patterns and anticipate trends. And we help our clients own the moments that matter. Bringing together left- and right-brains, we leverage our expertise in B2B and B2C marketing strategy, creative, and execution. We use four customizable solution frameworks — BrandBuilderSM | StoryTellerSM | MarketLeaderSM | BrandProtectorSM — to address core healthcare marketing challenges.

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Kathy Bloomgarden, CEO

Ruder Finn has a long legacy in healthcare, public health and public affairs, having worked with some

of the world's most prominent pharmaceutical, biotech, life sciences and consumer health companies. As healthcare and technology increasingly converge, we have worked with both large and small health companies to help bring innovative solutions to patients, hospitals and clinicians, from mobile applications to AI solutions to data and analytics-based predictive care. Our experience in healthcare runs broad and deep, and so does the services we provide clients. We are leading in areas that influence the healthcare landscape today, from pricing to patient engagement, development activities to community and advocacy building. We create inspiring, distinctive corporate messaging, patient-centered brand programs, and creative campaigns that get global media attention, all while utilizing new channels to tell your story to every person who matters most to you. As a truly integrated agency, our healthcare teams work seamlessly with our corporate, technology and digital teams to truly uncover what's next for the health industry as it transforms to deliver better experiences, solutions and outcomes for patients, providers, and everyone in between.

SCHNEIDER ASSOCIATES

Member of the Worldcom Public Relations Group

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Joan Schneider, Chief Executive Officer & Founder
Phil Pennellatore, President

— Continued on page 68

SCHNEIDER ASSOCIATES

Continued from page 67

Schneider Associates is a Launch communications agency that creates integrated marketing and media communications strategies for healthcare, education, consumer, corporate and public affairs clients. Our strengths in integrated media (blending PR, social media, digital marketing, and influencer relations) and Launch PR® (proprietary method of building awareness, interest, engagement, inquiries and action) are the hallmarks of our agency, and are what makes us different. The SA Newsroom is where the magic happens. We operate as a news entity—crafting brand stories across channels that impact client revenue. Our team of skilled professionals includes experts in brand positioning, public relations, online influencers, marketing strategists, experienced journalists, public affairs and community relations professionals, crisis communications veterans, graphic designers, videographers, media trainers and lead generation experts.

STANDING PARTNERSHIP

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Linda Locke, Senior Vice President | Partner | Healthcare Practice Leader
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Today, healthcare companies face many pressures: to deliver great patient outcomes at reduced cost, and maintain profitability in an uncertain political environment. The need to engage effectively with all stakeholders and carry out marketing strategies that drive business growth has never been higher.

Standing Partnership understands today's healthcare challenges and has a proven track record of more than 25 years helping national and regional healthcare organizations – from hospital systems and provider groups to health plans, healthcare IT companies and foundations – meet their goals.

We provide an integrated approach that helps organizations tell their story in a way that is consistent and compelling to build public will, educate their various audiences and

grow their business. We simplify the complexity of communicating about issues such as privacy, data, insurance, trust, measurement and legislation with important stakeholders. As a trusted partner, our services span strategic counsel to implementation support.

TONIC LIFE COMMUNICATIONS

One South Broad Street, 9th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
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toniclc.com

Maryellen Royle, Global CEO

As a full-service global healthcare PR agency, Tonic Life Communications has the art of communications down to a science. We provide pure PR solutions by applying both our scientific expertise and our mastery of creative communications. Whether you are launching a new corporate platform, a breakthrough prescription medicine, medical device, or consumer product, Tonic has the experience and insight to educate and engage key audiences that matter most.

Headquartered in Philadelphia and London, Tonic has global reach. Through our Huntsworth Health family of specialized agencies, we reach an additional 30 countries, spanning more than 70 offices. If you are looking for an agency partner with a 'can do' attitude, you will feel right at home with Tonic.

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In recent years, Trevelino/Keller has been fortunate to take advantage of the booming health industry in the Southeast. Its unique balance of health and technology experience has made it a sought after firm in segments such as biotech, health applications, medical software to name a few. The firm has also successfully married its retail/franchise experience with health to manage market entry programs for brands like CycleBar and Harken Health. With four dedicated markets – disruptive forces, category pioneers, unknown lead-

ers and wonder women, the agency defines its mission to work with a new generation of visionaries in need of public relations, digital/social marketing, demand generation and creative services.

Having successfully solidified its position as one of the preeminent boutique firms in the Southeast, its health and wellness practice integrates into the firm's existing base of business and consumer experience. Following one of its most successful years, ranked as the 10th fastest growing firm in the US and 2nd fastest in the Southeast, the firm has moved from a service-focused to outcome-driven philosophy, building customized programs around growth, value, leadership and engagement.

Owning the industry's number one retention rate, having lost one staffer to an agency in 14 years, the firm is known for its progressive, culture-rich programs like Red With Ted, CooleafPro, Farm to T/K and Greenworks. For more information, visit trevelinokeller.com.

W2O

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W2O is a privately-held integrated marketing communications firm built on something we call insight integration. It's a strategic approach based on unearthing transformative insights your competition can't see and integrating them into all of the work we do—across all marcom disciplines—for our clients' brands. We've grown from our inception in 2001 to over 550 people in 12 offices across the U.S. and Europe.

We build unfair advantages for brands. How? By following the right data to get to the point. That's where your brand becomes more relevant and valuable to your audience.

The truth is most of the data out there is just noise. The right data is the kind that tells you who your audience really is, what matters to them, and where your brand fits in their lives. It leads us to insights that we can use to transform your brand story, experiences—and even your offering. And it gives us the clearest measurement of how our work is performing and how to optimize it.

The W2O network includes WCG, Twist, Pure, Sentient and Marketeching. For more informa-

tion, please visit www.w2ogroup.com.

WEBER SHANDWICK

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Laura Schoen, President, Global Healthcare Practice

At a time when the healthcare industry landscape is changing daily, the Weber Shandwick healthcare practice is ready to meet clients' needs with award winning solutions. Our seasoned healthcare strategists offer expertise in pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, medical devices, consumer and public health. They target public health officials, payers, professional healthcare associations, health systems and hospitals. Whether informing audiences about care and diagnosis, driving awareness, introducing new treatment options, engaging and educating through digital channels, and influencing standards and policies, Weber Shandwick's approach takes into account the power and control consumers have over their health and well-being. Our campaigns focus on relevant outcomes – from changing minds and influencing behavior to activating advocates, creating engagement points and driving sales – and our goals ensure best-in-class delivery and success for our clients.

We believe that science is the universal language regardless of audience. Global science and data communications is a core capability of Weber Shandwick. We also are mindful that regulatory milestones are important compass points for a product and eagerly anticipated by many stakeholders. Our goal is to maximize these opportunities to their fullest generating attention that is comprehensive and in alignment with the larger communications goals of the company.

A unique offer of Weber Shandwick's healthcare practice is the Element Scientific Communications group, which employs 16 full-time PhDs, working closely with our account teams and our clients to ensure that every campaign we develop is strategically and data driven and in compliance with regulatory guidelines. ○

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www.odwyerpr.com

O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

TOP HEALTHCARE & MEDICAL PR FIRMS

Firm	Net Fees (2016)	Firm	Net Fees (2016)
1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$157,374,000	34. McNeely Pigott & Fox Public Relations , Nashville, TN	\$1,204,393
2. W2O Group , San Francisco, CA	103,200,000	35. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	1,100,000
3. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	28,170,400	36. Lambert, Edwards & Associates , Grand Rapids, MI	1,012,000
4. Spectrum , Washington, DC	20,000,000	37. CooperKatz & Co. , New York, NY	968,042
5. Health Unlimited , New York, NY	15,169,000	38. Standing Partnership , St. Louis, MO	962,348
6. Finn Partners , New York, NY	14,728,000	39. Bliss Integrated Communication , New York, NY	866,000
7. ReviveHealth , Nashville, TN	14,008,690	40. Rosica Communications , Paramus, NJ	791,212
8. Crosby , Annapolis, MD	10,600,320	41. Havas Formula , New York, NY	783,000
9. Coyne , Parsippany, NJ	10,200,000	42. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	779,177
10. Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock , Brentwood, TN	8,306,314	43. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	750,000
11. JPA Health Communications , Washington, DC	7,703,679	44. Merritt Group , McLean, VA	727,155
12. Dodge Communications , Alpharetta, GA	7,578,042	45. L.C. Williams & Associates , Chicago, IL	714,376
13. Makovsky , New York, NY	6,571,000	46. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	700,000
14. Padilla , Minneapolis, MN	6,221,545	47. North 6th Agency (N6A) , New York, NY	650,630
15. KYNE , New York, NY	5,900,761	48. Moore Communications Group , Tallahassee, FL	634,969
16. Gold PR , Corona, CA	5,739,037	49. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	372,130
17. Lazar Partners , New York, NY	5,616,020	50. Greentarget Global LLC , Chicago, IL	366,000
18. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	4,000,000	51. Maccabee , Minneapolis, MN	357,585
19. Public Communications Inc. , Chicago, IL	3,884,476	52. WordWrite Communications LLC , Pittsburgh, PA	314,700
20. MCS Healthcare Public Relations , Bedminster, NJ	3,464,235	53. Red Sky PR , Boise, ID	274,400
21. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	3,459,682	54. SPM Communications , Dallas, TX	235,300
22. RF Binder Partners , New York, NY	3,278,126	55. Marketing Maven Public Relations , Camarillo, CA	213,073
23. Hunter PR , New York, NY	3,250,000	56. BLAZE , Santa Monica, CA	200,000
24. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	3,017,370	57. BoardroomPR , Ft. Lauderdale, FL	200,000
25. Lovell Communications , Nashville, TN	2,238,666	58. Verasolve , Potomac, MD	147,000
26. PAN Communications , Boston, MA	2,184,817	59. Power Group, The , Dallas, TX	135,690
27. LaVoieHealthScience , Boston, MA	2,184,205	60. TransMedia Group , Boca Raton, FL	105,000
28. SevenTwenty Strategies , Washington, DC	2,015,068	61. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	95,600
29. Greenough , Boston, MA	1,800,466	62. IW Group, Inc. , West Hollywood, CA	91,000
30. Perry Communications Group , Sacramento, CA	1,733,579	63. Schneider Associates , Boston, MA	90,751
31. Beehive Strategic Communication , St. Paul, MN	1,457,335	64. Idea Grove , Dallas, TX	81,943
32. Inkhouse Media + Marketing , Waltham, MA	1,251,400	65. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	44,000
33. Landis Communications , San Francisco, CA	1,246,000	66. Fish Consulting , Hollywood, FL	24,000

Doing the expedient thing

By Fraser Seitel

The cardinal rule of the practice of PR should always be: "Do the Right Thing."

But sometimes, an organization trying to extricate itself from the center of controversy must do "the expedient thing" before it can deal with what is ultimately "right."

The current Trump-NFL controversy offers an instructive case study.

Here are the PR realities of this latest example of the world's wackiest President snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

First, the National Football League was well on its way

to getting fans to forget the problems introduced by former NFL quarterback Colin

Kaepernick, who last year famously refused to stand for the National Anthem and salute the flag for a country he claimed "oppresses people of color." This year, no NFL team chose to pick up Kaepernick's option, and the league began to put Kaepernick and the controversy he caused in its rear view mirror, that is, until ...

President Knucklehead Smith tweeted that players who knelt during the anthem should be fired, thus reigniting the unwanted, unneeded and ultimately unwinnable firestorm. Why, you may ask, would anyone volunteer to restart debate on such an incendiary and unrelated issue? Answer: Because he's President and you're not.

Second, the Kaepernick controversy isn't at all about "racial injustice" or "racial inequality" or even "personal freedom," as the players and coaches and owners and commissioner proclaimed after Trump's tweets. Rather, the issue is about disrespecting the American flag and the Star Spangled Banner and the soldiers who died for everyone else's personal freedom and the country these things represent. (Predictably, a day late and a dollar short, Trump's advisors made him tweet this corrective message well after Sunday's games and the public opinion damage

was done.)

The point is that of course, in America you have the right to kneel for the National Anthem. No one disputes that. The question is, "Is it right?" The answer to that is, "No," it isn't but ...

Third, because Donald Trump stuck his big yap in the middle of the debate, the NFL and its owners had no PR choice but to come out in solidarity with the players and lock arms in support of "racial justice" and "racial equality" and "personal freedom." Had they not done so, they would have been branded as "racists." Because the President bastardized the conversation, the only PR solution for the NFL was to do the expedient thing.

Similarly, doing the expedient thing was the right PR solution when CNN immediately fired comedian Kathy Griffin when she thought it funny to dangle a severed Trump head before the cameras. And it was also the right solution when KB Homes immediately slashed the bonus of CEO Jeffrey Mezger and Griffin's Hollywood neighbor, when it was disclosed that the foul-mouthed CEO had used most un-CEO like language against his loud-mouthed neighbor.

By the same token, the failure of the New York Yankees to do the expedient thing after a little girl was horribly struck by a foul ball was a significant PR blunder. The Yankees should have announced immediately — but still haven't — that the team would install increased protective stadium netting. Eventually, the Yankees will install such netting, but the public relations black eye for not doing it expediently will remain.

Which brings us back to the NFL and its Trump reaction problem. Now that the teams have locked arms with the players, what PR path should owners follow now? Here's what I'd recommend:

- One, take a cue from Philadelphia Eagles' lineman Chris Long, who donated minority scholarships to his hometown of Charlottesville, VA, and contribute money, support or time to organizations working toward racial equality and justice.
- Two, limit your involvement to these charities and avoid public statements that might expand the controversy, i.e. let your actions speak for you.
- Three, push the discussion away from politics and back onto the field where it belongs.

The PR axiom is that no business courts controversy, particularly when it has nothing to do with the business itself. Controversy is the enemy of doing business.

So, the best PR result for the NFL is for President Trump to get back on more familiar turf and start again bad-mouthing North Korea and Rocket Man and leave pro football alone. ○



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*.



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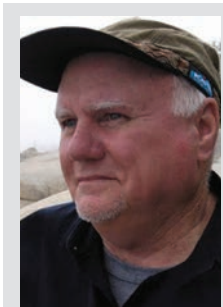
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RPPRP (rich people's PR problems)

By Bill Huey

You think you have PR problems? Your problems are nothing compared to those of Jeffrey Mezger, CEO of KB Homes, one of the nation's largest home-builders. Mezger was caught recently on security camera video calling neighbor Kathy Griffin "a bald dyke" and a "f***ing c*nt."



Bill Huey is president of Strategic Communications, a consultancy he established 30 years ago, and the author of *The Gookville Murders* (Kindle, 2016).

For good measure Mezger threw in Donald Trump's name, and in case there was any doubt about his intentions, he went on to say, "Let's declare war, a**hole, 'cause we got a lot to go for. Let's bring it on, you bi*ch."

In answer to that tirade, KB Homes

(which no doubt realize that women make the majority of decisions about home buying) trimmed Mezger's bonus by 25 percent and stated flatly that he would be fired if anything like that happened again.

Now that's a PR problem. How would you like to be a part of Kathy Griffin's comedy routine forever?

But Jeffrey Mezger's PR problems pale in comparison to the one faced by Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, who had to officially chastise his "very good friend" Donald Trump in a statement Sunday that read:

"I am deeply disappointed by the tone of the comments made by the President on Friday. I am proud to be associated with so many players who make such tremendous contributions in positively impacting our communities. Their efforts, both on and off the field, help bring people together and make our community stronger. There is no greater unifier in this country than sports, and unfortunately, nothing more divisive than politics. I think our political leaders could learn a lot from the lessons of teamwork and the importance of working together toward a common goal. Our players are intelligent, thoughtful and care deeply about our community and I support their right to peacefully affect social change and raise awareness in a manner that they feel is most impactful."

In addition to calling Trump a very good friend, Kraft has dined with the President and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe



Jeffrey Metzger

at Mar a Lago, and is one of at least seven NFL owners who contributed \$1 million to Trump's inaugural committee, according to the *New York Daily News*. He recently gave the President a Super Bowl ring.

What's a billionaire to do? If Kraft continues to stand with his players who are kneeling during the national anthem, he might as well change the name of the team from the New England Patriots to the New England Protesters, or the New England Sort-of-Patriots. Patriotish?

If, on the other hand, he sides with his very good friend Donald Trump, he will continue to enjoy the benefits of being the President's friend. Trump keeps score like no president since Nixon, and if Kraft continues to diss him by disagreeing in public, The Donald will turn on him like a hyena forced onto the South Beach Diet.

Here's the rub: Siding with Trump would alienate Kraft from his high-priced roster, who hang together as a team, living by the same sort of code that binds any other group of mercenaries. It's a code that every owner and coach knows and respects.

It would also put Kraft at some distance from the league position articulated by Roger Goodell, which is that Trump "demonstrates an unfortunate lack of respect" for the NFL, and the "overwhelming force for good our clubs and players represent in our communities."

In other words, Goodell, with typical sententiousness, is saying that sports are



Robert Kraft

a wholesome influence on American society, and none more wholesome than a \$13 billion enterprise like the NFL. The billionaires who make up the NFL owners group are interested in nothing but the welfare of the nation, building giant stadiums, and chasing big rings.

Kraft himself is a sort of team member of the NFL, albeit one with a fractious history vis-à-vis the front office. So how can he extricate his personal brand and his team from this dilemma? By winning another Super Bowl? Through more charitable activities featuring the Brady Bunch? By getting together with his fellow owner/donors and telling Trump to pipe down? The NFL's turn in the barrel has clearly arrived, and the way Robert Kraft handles this situation is likely to affect the entire NFL enterprise.

Meanwhile, over at NASCAR, the mother lode of Trump's voter base, things are less ambiguous. Everybody stands. As Richard "The King" Petty put it: "Anybody that don't stand up for the anthem oughta be out of the country. Period. What got 'em where they're at? The United States," Petty said, adding that any protester within his organization would be fired.

Trump praised NASCAR in a crack-of-dawn tweet Monday. Between threatening North Korea and berating professional sports, one wonders how he has any time for the kind of deep thinking the presidency requires. ○

Private sector launches lobbying blitz amid NAFTA renegotiations

Several U.S. corporations have retained Capitol Hill representation amid ongoing attempts by the Trump administration to renegotiate terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement, as leaders from the United States, Canada and Mexico host a series of meetings this year in a bid to address concerns and resolve issues related to the historic 1994 trade accord.

Starbucks in September signed a pact with McGuireWoods public affairs unit McGuireWoods Consulting on NAFTA-related tax and trade matters.

Starbucks, which opened its first coffee shop in Mexico in 2002, now maintains more than 600 locations throughout the country. The Seattle-based coffee giant acquires a large amount of its coffee from Mexican producers and even established a production support center in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas last year. Starbucks has since has donated millions to coffee-producing communities throughout the country in order to support coffee growers' livelihoods.

Whirlpool Corporation is another U.S. company in recent weeks to appoint lobbying counsel in response to the development, inking an agreement with Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld to advocate in Washington on behalf of NAFTA-related issues. The Benton Harbor, MI-based home appliance manufacturer, which markets Whirlpool, Maytag, KitchenAid, Jenn-Air and other household brands, drew criticism in 2009 when it shuttered a plant in Evansville, Indiana and moved production of some of its refrigerators to Mexico. A plant in Fort Smith, Arkansas, which staffed about 5,000, closed two years later for the same reason.

In an unexpected reversal, the *Fortune* 500 company, which maintains manufacturing facilities in the Mexican cities of Monterrey, Ramos Arizpe and Celaya, in 2014 moved production of some of its commercial front-load washing machines from Mexico to a plant in Clyde, Ohio, allegedly in a bid to save on shipping costs to U.S. consumers, who comprise an overwhelming majority of that product's audience.

President Trump, who has long seen NAFTA as deleterious to U.S. manufacturing jobs, once referred to the agreement as "the worst trade deal maybe ever signed anywhere," and has vowed to rework some of the accord's terms, even threatening at times to remove the U.S. from the agreement altogether.

In July, the Trump administration said it wanted to reduce the United States' trade deficit and bolster domestic manufacturing by increasing NAFTA's rules of origin percentages, removing provisions that prevent the U.S. from imposing import restrictions on Canadian and Mexican goods. Trump has also pushed for improved patent and copyright protections, as well as raising Mexico's labor and environmental standards. Trump has said that he wants a renewed agreement completed by the end of the year.

Trade between the three countries was more than \$1.1 trillion in 2016, according to Council on Foreign Relations estimates.

The possibility of a NAFTA pullout, meanwhile, has some U.S. business leaders with Mexico production facilities panicked. A number of U.S.-based trade organizations have followed suit with Starbucks and Whirlpool, with the American Petroleum Institute, the Toy Industry Association, the American Feed Industry Association, the Consumer Technology Association, candy group the National Confectioners Association, and the national organization of American wineries WineAmerica all hiring lobbying counsel in the last month to advocate in D.C. on their behalf regarding the NAFTA renegotiations. ○



CRC buys Conway's firm

CRC Public Relations has acquired The Polling Co., which was founded in 1995 by White House counselor Kellyanne Conway, to buttress its advocacy and digital offerings.

Greg Mueller, CRC president and former communications director for Pat Buchanan, called TPC "an established brand with a strong reputation among conservatives, Republicans, public policy organizations, corporations and associations."

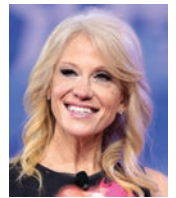
TPC's WomanTrend unit tracks social, cultural, financial, professional and health trends affecting women.

Brett Lloyd, CEO of TPC, said teaming with CRC will "allow our clients to leverage our polling and research even more effectively as part of a broader PR and communications strategy."

TPC will maintain its office in DC.

Conway left TPC upon joining the Trump White House.

Alexandria-based CRC, which used to be called Creative Response Concepts, has worked for clients such as Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, Koch Brothers' political advocacy group Americans for Prosperity, General Motors, Federalist Society, Brent Bozell's Media Research Center, Chevron, Americans for Tax Reform, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, PhRMA, Parents Television Council and Regnery Publishing. ○



Kellyanne Conway

American Psychiatric Assn.'s Gonzalez joins Podesta

The Podesta Group has brought on healthcare strategist Ariel Gonzalez as a Principal. He will lead the firm's healthcare lobbying practice, which represents clients such as the American Health Care Association, General Nutrition Corporation and Novartis.

Gonzalez comes to Podesta from the American Psychiatric Association, where he was Chief of Government Relations, serving as a key spokesperson for the organization before national, state and local media. He previously directed federal health and family advocacy at AARP, where he was the chief expert on Medicare, Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, physician reimbursement and other issues.

His past experience includes developing and leading federal and state coalitions to advocate on behalf of clients. In addition, he has served as a pro bono attorney for victims of domestic violence and legal counsel for the elderly. ○



Ariel Gonzalez

Saudi Arabia plans global PR to counter bad image

Saudi Arabia is planning a worldwide communications campaign to counter its negative press coverage and is in the market for PR firms eager to handle the effort, according to the *Financial Times*.

The program calls for information “hubs” to be established in London, Berlin, Paris and Moscow, according to a document reviewed by the *FT*. Additional hubs could be established in Mumbai, Beijing and Tokyo in 2018. The hubs would produce press releases, publish social media content and invite “influencers” to visit Saudi Arabia.

The information ministry wants PR firms to set up operations to “distribute the Saudi perspective on global developments in response to negative/inaccurate publications about the kingdom,” according to the document.

The PR initiative comes as Saudi Arabia spearheads an economic and political blockade against neighbor Qatar, and wages war in Yemen, where it has been accused of bombing civilians.

Andrew Bowen of the American Enterprise Institute told the *FT* that Saudi Arabia is losing the communications war with Qatar.

Saudi Arabia uses Qorvis MSLGroup, Podesta and Harbour Group for PR in the US. ○

Qatar tabs BlueFront for UN work

Qatar is using BlueFront Strategies for its public awareness campaign to educate members of the United Nations about the need to lift the economic blockade imposed by a group of its Arab neighbors led by Saudi Arabia.

BlueFront, which is part of DDC Advocacy, is to work with Qatar’s communications office to leverage existing research, political thinking and experience to develop “creative messaging for complicated PA issues” for a multi-channel effort during the UN’s general assembly meeting in New York, according to its media services agreement.

The one-month effort is worth \$100,000.

Sarah Taylor Fagen, who was political director in George W. Bush’s administration, founded BlueFront, which was sold to

DDC in 2011. She’s a DDC partner.

The Arab states erected the blockade mid-June due to Qatar’s alleged ties with terrorist groups, relations with Iran and support for freedom of expression as home nation of Al Jazeera.

French President Emmanuel Macron on Sept. 15 called for the lifting of the Qatar blockade. ○

Akin Gump advises Marshall Islands on WWII cleanup aid

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld has been hired to represent the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the purpose of launching a Washington education campaign focused on the island nation’s sacrifices for the United States during the Second World War, as well as to petition an increase in the funding that country currently receives from the U.S. government.

The Micronesian nation, which is comprised of five islands and nearly 30 atolls in the Pacific, was occupied by the U.S. during World War II. During the Cold War era that followed, the islands became a nuclear testing site, and hosted the infamous Bikini Atoll program, where the first U.S. hydrogen bomb was tested. Those tests subjected residents to radiation fallout and rendered parts of the islands uninhabitable, and resulted in the disbursement of ongoing compensation from the U.S. government.

The Marshall Islands are also known as an “airplane graveyard” due to the number of planes, ships, tanks and trucks dumped there by U.S. Forces after leaving the area at the end of World War II.

According to documents filed with the Justice Department, Akin Gump will represent RMI’s embassy in Washington for the purpose of conducting outreach to U.S. government officials regarding the need for enhanced federal funding to pay for the clean-up of World War II-era shipwrecks and downed planes in RMI waters, which continues to present environmental and safety risks due to oil spills and corrosion.

The firm will also petition government officials regarding \$20 million in federal funding that was allegedly authorized by Congress but never allocated, while also building a case for renegotiations of a new economic agreement with the United States after 2023.

The pact runs for a year and fetches the international law and lobbying firm \$20,000 per month. ○

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.

Baker Botts LLP, Houston, TX, registered **Sep. 15, 2017** for Ministry of Financial Services & Home Affairs, Cayman Islands Government, Cayman Islands, regarding international taxation and public policy matters before Congress, Treasury and the White House.

Fleishman-Hillard Inc., St. Louis, MO, registered **Sep. 19, 2017** for Office of the Prime Minister of Japan, Tokyo, Japan, regarding the forwarding of electronic and/or hard copies of Japanese Government magazine “We are Tomodachi” to editors of newspapers and business magazines in the US including the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Fortune, The Atlantic and Harvard Business Review.

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.

Mehlman Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas, Inc., Washington, D.C., registered **Sep. 21, 2017** for Project Firefly, Easthampton, NY, regarding approval for a pilot program creating an Economic Development Fund using foreign capital to invest in small and medium sized U.S. businesses.

Mr. Robert Lehman, Washington, D.C., registered **Sep. 21, 2017** for National Election Defense Coalition, Davis, CA, regarding election cybersecurity.

Alston & Bird LLP, Washington, D.C., registered **Sep. 18, 2017** for Alibaba Group Holding Limited, George Town, Cayman Islands, regarding policy issues relating to intellectual property, international trade, e-commerce and technology.

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