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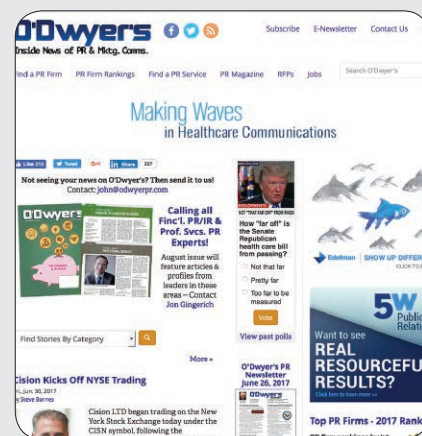
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Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation as required by U.S. Postal Service Form 3526-R. 1. & 13. Publication Title: O'Dwyer's. 2. Publication No.: 0003-525. 3. Filing Date: Sept. 19, 2018. 4. & 5. Frequency of issue/Number of issues: Monthly/11. 6. Subscription price is \$60 annually. 7. & 8. Mailing address of publication and general business office is 271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. 9. Publisher (Jack O'Dwyer) and Editor (Jon Gingerich) are at 271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Stockholders: John R. O'Dwyer, Christine O'Dwyer, and John M. O'Dwyer, 271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. 11. There are no holders of bonds, mortgages or other securities. 14. Issue date for circulation data to follow is September 2018. A-I: Extent and nature of circulation: A. Average No. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1,200. Actual No. of copies of August 2018 issue: 1,000. C. Average paid and/or requested circulation during preceding 12 months: 920. Actual paid and/or requested circulation for August 2018 issue: 779. E: Average total non-requested distribution by mail and outside the mail for preceding 12 months: 48. Actual non-requested distribution by the mail and outside the mail for August 2018 issue: 0. F: Total average distribution for preceding 12 months: 968. Actual distribution of August 2018 issue: 779. G: Average number of copies not distributed preceding 12 months: 232. Actual number of copies of August 2018 issue not distributed: 221. H: Average of total distribution and copies not distributed for preceding 12 months: 1,200. Sum of total August 2018 issue distributed and not distributed: 1,000. I: Average percent paid and/or requested circulation for preceding 12 months: 95%. Actual percent paid and/or requested circulation for August 2018 issue: 100%. I certify that all information furnished above is true and complete. Jack O'Dwyer, President, J.R. O'Dwyer Co.

A young boy with a surprised expression, wearing goggles on his head, is pouring orange liquid from a beaker into a funnel. He is in a laboratory setting with various glassware and colorful liquids (orange, yellow, green, purple) visible. The background is a bookshelf filled with books.

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Finding meaning in a post-truth world

Donald Trump is less responsible for America's existential crisis than he is a symptom of it, the result of what happens when people identify themselves by an increasingly narrow set of beliefs, and the only remaining tie that binds us is the notion that objective truth no longer has any value in informing those beliefs.

Our current political dysfunction can be illustrated with a simple exercise: if you told me your personal stance on, say, climate change, I'd be able to determine with 90 percent accuracy your positions on immigration, abortion and gun control, issues that have nothing to do with one other aside from serving as ideological linchpins in the culture wars that've fenced off the two major political parties in this country. These religious commitments to a fixed set of policy issues don't represent how people normally exchange ideas. In reality, we're motivated by pluralistic principles, our own made-to-order goals. People are complex, even if our modern political silos belie that notion.

Our media environment has definitely had a hand in widening this schism, where hyper-partisan news outlets and social networks are curated to suit our ideology, offering echo chambers that cater to personalized, subjective accounts of reality. Complex issues are condensed into easy-to-swallow slogans. Anyone who doesn't share our viewpoints is naive, stupid or racist. An à la carte media menu is available to feed back our unearned sense of moral superiority, confirming why we're always right and why the other side is always wrong.

This makes conversation with anyone who doesn't share our beliefs difficult, because any claims that run contrary to our fixed ideas of "truth" are seen as an affront to our narcissistic commitments to the identities that define us. It's at the point that, as former *New York Times* book critic Michiko Kakutani wrote in her new book, *The Death of Truth*, "Stars Wars movies and the Super Bowl remain some of the few communal events that capture an audience cutting across demographic lines." I'm guessing Kakutani was still drafting her tome when the NFL's anthem protests turned the league into a political battleground. So, Star Wars it is.

It's interesting that the post-truth era has become the left's *bête noire*, given its tenets sound eerily similar to what postmodernists in the academic left have been selling us for decades. The legion of Fox News viewers who refuse to accept science, who flock to media narratives that undermine the biases of a perceived "establishment" power structure, remarkably mirrors a school of thought whose message has been, essentially, the same: that everything is an infinitely interpretable social construction, that there are no universal truths. I'm not suggesting Trump has been reading Foucault or Derrida, but addressing this problem is nothing if it isn't a clear and obvious repudiation of the failings of postmodernism, be it from Gauloises-puffing professors or a populist movement with an aversion to anything resembling objective reality.

In fact, the culture wars have had this weird effect of causing a 180-degree ideological flip on so many issues for the right and left you could argue they've arrived at a sort of accidental consensus in the sense that issues now matter less than blind party loyalty. When I was a kid, conservatives were offended by everything. A trip to a college campus today confirms this is a behavior now ensconced firmly in the left. The left 20 years ago opposed global trade agreements. Now the left is decrying Trump's tariffs against China while conservatives, once vanguards of free trade, support them. Conservatives railed against the left for their "relativism," but now it's the right who seem to believe truth is in the eye of the beholder. The left, meanwhile, has become an ardent defender of science, though, to be fair, they haven't been immune from the follies of cherry-picking data that confirms their preconceptions either.

So, what to do? It appears the only commonality people share anymore is their logical dexterity, the idea that they're more interested in earning prestige points within their political tribes than expressing coherent viewpoints. Ideally, both sides will eventually realize we're being played by bad information. If we ever intend to repair the bridge between us, we need to reclaim objectivity, and to do that we have to regain control of data and demand better standards from our media. Facebook, now Americans' number-one daily news source, is essentially a facts-free zone, where clickbait and conspiracy theories reach more eyes than actual news. Facebook's massive September security breach, where hackers gained access to 50 million user accounts, attests to the fact that the site remains perilously vulnerable years after data firms and Russian troll farms used it for propaganda efforts in the months leading up to the 2016 election. If you want to improve your media diet, you could do worse than delete your social network accounts. This clearly isn't working.

If our post-truth era teaches us anything, hopefully it's the notion that using media to feed our confirmation biases is a terrible substitute for the greater value of using these tools to gain the insight and knowledge that comes with a rational worldview. Advancements in AI and machine learning will undoubtedly make tomorrow's fake news even more convincing. As long as truth remains a dispensable casualty, we can't expect to bridge our divide anytime soon. But the unwritten implication for failing to do so is dire. We've created the very sort of environment in which extremist ideologies thrive. ○

— Jon Gingerich

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

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41% of companies drop \$500k per year on digital PR

Nearly half of businesses now spend at least a half-million dollars in digital marketing each year, according to a recent report.

By Jon Gingerich

Businesses are devoting more resources to boosting their online presence, and are planning to spend more this year on digital marketing than ever before, according to a recent survey released by business news site The Manifest.

Nearly half of businesses (41 percent) reported spending at least a half-million dollars on digital marketing each year, and more than four-fifths of businesses (81 percent) spend at least \$50,000, according to the survey.

More than a third of businesses (34 percent) said they devote between 51-75 percent of their overall marketing budgets to digital marketing.

Among the businesses that currently use digital marketing, nearly all (99 percent) said they plan to invest more in at least one digital marketing channel within the next year. And most businesses also plan to increase their investments across a variety of digital marketing channels, with social media marketing (64 percent) and websites (55 percent) topping the list.

On the other hand, nearly three-quarters of businesses (73 percent) said they plan to decrease their investment in at least one digital marketing channel in the next year. In particular, businesses are less interested spending time and money on display/banner advertisements and paid search advertisements in the next year.

Consumers fret over tech's expanding role

Consumers credit tech for improving their lives, but many worry about tech's expanding presence, according to a recent study.

By Steve Barnes

While most consumers say technology has improved their lives over the past five years, concerns about its expanding presence are growing, according to a new study released by Ketchum. The most tech-savvy consumers, dubbed "techruptors," are leading the charge when it comes to voicing those concerns.

Ketchum's Social Permission and Technology Study finds that the conflicting

Businesses typically rely on a variety of resources in the course of implementing their digital marketing efforts. Most use in-house staff (69 percent), followed by software (59 percent), a digital marketing agency (50 percent), and a freelancer or consultant (32 percent).

Among businesses that currently rely solely on in-house staff and don't use a digital marketing agency, freelancer or consultant, nearly one-third (32 percent) said they plan to outsource their digital marketing efforts within the next year. ○

views people have of technology are often a question of convenience vs. privacy. For example, 84 percent of those surveyed said that technology makes shopping more convenient, with close to half (48 percent) saying that they do all their shopping online. But only 8 percent trust retailers with their personal data, and 37 percent of respon-

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Trust in media rebounds, says study

Trust in the media is on the rebound when it comes to corporate and social responsibility matters, according to a recent study.

By Kevin McCauley

Trust in the media is up when it comes to information about corporate and social responsibility, while reliance on the accountability of government officials is down, according to a September study released by G&S Business Communications.

According to G&S's ninth annual Sense & Sustainability study, 49 percent of Americans turn to news media for information about corporate social and environmental responsibility. That's a six percent jump from last year's 43 percent, which marked a five-year low.

In addition, more people are likely to pursue information about issues surrounding corporate accountability. Only 25 percent of survey respondents said that they are staying uninformed, down from 32 percent in 2017's survey.

However, faith in the government's ability to effectively address problems of corporate responsibility is weakening, the study says. Almost two-thirds of survey respondents (64 percent) said their confidence that elected officials can be relied on for any-

thing more than thoughts and prayers following a public emergency was less than it used to be. A similar number (65 percent) indicated that their trust in the government to protect the environment or responsibly use natural resources had fallen.

The positive perception of workplace diversity and inclusion appears to be on the rise. When asked to compare their current views to those they held five years ago, 60

percent of respondents said they were equally or more confident that employers who promote workplace diversity are also likely to attract top talent.

The takeaway from the study is that Americans want "harder evidence in the form of facts and figures to inform their decisions and actions," said G&S managing director and sustainability leader Ron Loch.

For the G&S Sense & Sustainability study, global public opinion and data company YouGov plc polled 2,659 U.S. adults ages 18 and older between August 21 and 23. ○

TECH'S EXPANDING ROLE

Continued from page 8

dents don't trust any organization with their data.

The same split can be seen in how technology affects relationships with family members, especially for families with children. Although 55 percent of respondents say technology has made time spent with their children better, 85 percent are concerned about their child's safety and 76 percent have concerns over the effect that new developments in technology could have on the privacy, as well as the safety, of their kids.

Consumers have contradictory opinions about protecting data privacy. Although 85 percent say there should be more legislation around data privacy, they voice little faith in the ability of government to deal with the problem. Only 18 percent say they trust state government to protect their digital privacy.

The source of action to address those conflicts, the study says, comes from the "techruptors," young digital natives who have fully integrated technology into their day-to-day lives. More than 9 out of 10 are in favor of further legislation around data privacy, with 92 percent saying they at least partly agree that the U.S. needs a system along the lines of the GDPR that monitors data privacy within the European Union. ○



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Digital turns the tables on influence

Communication pros must educate their clients on how digital media has democratized the healthcare landscape and has changed the ways in which consumers are now engaging with health information.

By Gil Bashe, Kristie Kuhl and John Bianchi

How many screens do you check each day? Smart watch, phone, tablet, laptop and desktop? More? On those screens, how many social sites do you visit and how often? It's an accepted fact that digital media has changed the communications dynamic and in many more ways than people recognize. For the last several years, communications professionals — on the client and agency side — have treated digital media as a new and growing group of social outlets, a place to post “information billboards” or a wait-and-see mystery. This isn't the complete picture of the digital media landscape.

Once PR practitioners pursued the “big placement.” But, the *New York Times*, *USA Today* or *Washington Post* feature — still cause for champagne-popping celebration — may have less reach than the story that goes viral on social media with hundreds of shares that add up to millions of influencer connections. The bigger that conversation, the further the reach, drawing in people from the furthest points of the health ecosystem circle-of-influence, creating awareness and driving change.

What's changing is more than the number and type of social media outlets. Digital technology enables new ways of relating to information, even through what are still being labeled as “traditional” media outlets. Digital communications transform how media works, whether it's the 200-year-old newspaper or a two-month old blogging platform.

Digital media is inviting readers to become part of the narrative. When the *Wall Street Journal* publishes an important story geared for the Tuesday print edition — thanks to digital media — readers are already viewing the story online Monday night and talking about it on social media that evening. Opinions are being formed, allies and pundits taking sides and positive and negative comments appearing before the traditional media hit takes center stage. The information exchange game is in motion hours before the paper appears at the corner newsstand.

As communications professionals, we need to tell stories with impact and resonance. We need to move beyond thinking about securing the “big placement” to sparking the “big conversation” that changes mindsets and behaviors. We can no longer look at pursuing traditional media and

driving social media conversation as mutually exclusive; they're parts of the same tactical synthesis. Overall, the story is the spark that drives interest and real engagement. It's what builds brand awareness and the call-to-action to improve peoples' lives.

At the heart of this new information environment is an ability to search, access and engage in seconds. SEO and hashtags have the power to connect with topics that are important to our lives with specificity. The smart phone has enabled a 24/7 “I want to know now” engagement mindset. “Now,” takes precedence over complete information. To compete in fast-breaking news environments, top “traditional media” reporters often post initial comments on Twitter and file their longer stories hours later. In the meantime, an army of content bloggers have taken center stage with 280-character Twitter posts, ample length to convey key points and drive social engagement.

To make sure that target audiences assess client news objectively, communication pros must educate their clients to consider how information changes hands. While the *Wall Street Journal* might be a safe bet to cover a story with objectivity, winning over a social media pundit and seeing their positive tweet may have equal influencer value.

The transformative effects of the digital conversation become apparent in how we research information in every area of our lives, from cooking to politics. The applications of this transformation to how we relate to our personal health are already apparent and are making their mark — and waves — on how consumers consider their right to know and ultimately engage.

“Many consumers expect to own their health journey,” said Michael Heinley, Partner, Health, Finn Partners, and former WebMD VP of Corporate Communication. “Reporters are also consumers and approach access and timing of company information through the lens of: ‘are you worthy of my trust?’ Failure to move quickly is seen as stalling or massaging the facts.”

Likewise, if we consumers go to the doctor's office for a blood test, we're no longer content to wait for the paper results. In many cases, they're available online for our access the same moment that the physician's office is notified. Here, curiosity — once cited as the danger that “killed the cat” — saves lives. Spurred to action, we may do our own research on the risks and

possibilities the results reveal. Though not fully informed on how to translate results into next-steps action, we're infinitely more aware — albeit anxious — before receiving that physician's office voice message: “The doctor would like you to come in to discuss your lab tests.”

Digital information is creating healthcare democratization, especially in an age when we rely less and less on a consistent primary care physician and have become our own health historians. As access to information is critical to our families' wellbeing, we now need our health data at hand. Life-enhancing wearables link to our smart phones and alert us to irregular heart rhythms, adjust diabetes insulin pumps and even fine-tune neuro-implantables to better control Parkinson's tremor. Digital access is improving lifestyles for people with chronic conditions through cloud-based services that enable people to store and access health records while on the go. Personal investment in digital communications — driving news and social engagement — is the mark of the early adapter.

We no longer wait for tomorrow's paper when it's news that's vital to our pocketbook or medicine chest. Digital media unleashes the “power of now,” and as agencies, we must harness it, or our clients will be left behind, or worse. More importantly, from the moment fast-moving social media reporters share a point of view on their channels, physician leaders, patient advocates and other reporters interact and put their stake in the ground. The sharing of accurate, authentic and compelling editorial and content is how we facilitate a conver-



Gil Bashe



Kristie Kuhl



John Bianchi

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Change is healthcare's greatest opportunity

The healthcare industry's biggest pain points are also playing an important role in driving transformation and innovation.

By Ryan Lilly

While the healthcare industry has been talking about evolving for decades, we finally stand at the precipice of real change. With disruptors like Amazon, Berkshire Hathaway and JP Morgan pushing in, and mega-mergers like CVS and Aetna challenging traditional models of care, the pillars of this long-stagnant industry are finally being challenged. Couple this with skyrocketing out-of-pocket costs and increasingly empowered healthcare consumers, and healthcare's status quo just doesn't seem possible.

Exactly what the "healthcare revolution" will look like remains to be seen, but it's difficult to imagine the industry looking the same in five or ten years. No matter where your organization falls within the healthcare continuum, now is the time to look to the future and seek opportunities to do better.

Fee-for-service model

To understand where healthcare is headed, it's important to first understand where we're falling short, so we can anticipate where change is needed most. Cost tops the list of complaints when it comes to care in this country. Many feel the fee-for-service model we've built, by which providers are paid regardless of patient outcomes, is a foundational flaw that drives up costs. Think about it: would you pay a mechanic if they replaced a part and your car still didn't run? Probably not. But if your mechanic was a doctor, they'd get paid for the services rendered, regardless of the outcome.

This is changing slowly, as the industry shifts toward outcome-based reimbursement and away from fee-for-service. A little disruption from non-traditional healthcare entities may be just the kick in the pants the industry needs to accelerate this change.

Pricing and billing

Healthcare pricing and billing has also been increasingly scrutinized in recent years. Unlike virtually every other industry, what healthcare costs consumers isn't based on the cost to deliver it. Instead, healthcare costs are determined primarily by what providers can negotiate with insurers. This means that pricing isn't fixed and is generally tied to how much leverage a given provider organization or payer has. Essentially, the more members or patients fall under their umbrella of coverage or care, the better their chances of negotiating an ideal price. This is why you can pay one price for a knee replacement in one city and three times that amount in another. The increased price has nothing to do with the quality of the knee

replacement or care you receive.

The pricing issue isn't even limited to the care we receive from our doctors. It also extends to the pharmacy. This is another slice of the healthcare pie under increasing scrutiny for its pricing models, which again, is unlike just about anything we see in any other industry. While biopharma breakthroughs are resulting in specialty drugs for rare conditions which have historically equated to a death sentence, many come with million-dollar price tags. While exciting, these innovative drugs are only impactful if we can get them into the hands of the patients who need them. And for many, the cost is simply too prohibitive.

Quality of care

While the cost of healthcare is top of mind for many, quality of care also remains under threat. Currently, around half of all physicians report being burnt out. Think about that the next time you go to the doctor: Your chances of getting a physician who is still engaged in their profession are about as good as a coin flip, which a truly scary prospect for patients and for the future of care in this country.

These astronomical burnout rates are attributed to several different things, but two of the most commonly cited culprits are mandated adoption of subpar technology and increased administrative workload. This is ironic, when you consider that technology has been positioned and marketed to make doctors' lives easier and improve patient care.

The above doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of healthcare's many pain points, but it begins to paint a clearer picture of the areas where we're falling short and where subsequent opportunities for change exist. It's not at all surprising that such a profitable and inherently risk-averse industry is slow to change, but there's no more room in healthcare for "because we've always done it that way." While I don't pretend to think that professional communicators will figure this all out, I do know that we need to anticipate change and be prepared to address stakeholders that may not traditionally fall within our purview.

Communicating differentiators to address pain points

We're already seeing healthcare organizations reexamine their marketing efforts in anticipation of change. As patients find themselves with more options to access and pay for care, it's no longer enough to be a hospital or nearby physician practice.

And as more employers build out their own care delivery networks, it will no longer be enough to be one of a few insurers in a given geography either.

Already, we're seeing more examples of provider organizations charging a monthly fee. Regardless of the model, it's clear that the normal structures are being challenged with an eye toward lower cost and increased quality.

For healthcare organizations, this means highlighting differentiators like patient engagement tools, access to telehealth or intuitive user experiences. It means looking toward a future which may see your organization delivering different messages to different stakeholders.

We're heading further away from sterile, cold, acute settings and experiences, and increasingly toward something that's more like a spa, where aesthetic and customer service are a priority. Anyone who's been to a modern urgent care can attest to this. The movement to transform and modernize healthcare isn't limited to payers and providers. Technology vendors are also evolving to become more Apple-esque and mirror the technologies we use in our personal lives.

Whether it's employers becoming healthcare providers, Amazon drones delivering prescriptions or visiting the doctor via an iPhone, major changes are on the horizon. This represents a huge opportunity from a communications perspective, as the industry will be looking increasingly toward thought leaders to help make sense of it all. It's up to communications professionals to help paint the picture of change, articulate a value proposition and educate the market as to how their organization is driving and/or reacting to it all.

The worst thing the industry can do is resist these changes or turn a blind eye, as the box has already been opened — and it doesn't appear possible to shut it again. Much of the success of a revolution — like the one currently occurring in healthcare — depends on collaborative idea sharing and a sense of the greater good. This is something that more brands should keep in mind as they turn their gaze to the future. Whether you're Jeff Bezos, Seema Verma, Sanjay Gupta or a healthcare PR practitioner, change is coming. And we all play an important role in defining what that change looks like.

Ryan Lilly leads the healthcare practice at Matter Communications. ○



Ryan Lilly



8 out of 10

healthcare marketers are increasing their budgets to reach HCPs, payers and patients.

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Healthcare's challenger brands

Why brands in the medical device world require a different approach to marketing.

By Amy Fisher

A challenger brand is exactly what it sounds like — a brand that, as an emerging company or division of an established company, is challenging the status quo. It's an organization going up against a market leader to solve a new or existing business challenge. But a challenger brand's main selling point is its approach, how it aims to solve challenges by tackling the problem from an entirely new angle and shaking up how end users view the market in the process.

And shake things up they have.

Uber, Airbnb and HelloFresh are challenger brands that successfully broke through the noise and changed the way we see transportation, accommodations and grocery shopping. Beyond these new "household name" brands, the medical industry also has its fair share of challengers — whether it's introducing a new way to screen for diseases, a new implantable heart device or a different delivery method for vaccines, there are plenty of companies disrupting the market with a new approach to solving an old problem.

Most challenger brands — especially start-up challengers — face obstacles when attempting to capture attention and market share for a new idea: low brand awareness, limited resources and lack of understanding from buyers to name a few — but the medical device industry in particular must overcome more hurdles than others.

Rules and regulations

Most challenger brands can prep the market before launch, building excitement with sneak peeks and big disruption promises. Think about how Apple had long promoted a portable, simple, connected computer, so when it launched the iPad, buyers were already lined up.

Because of the nature of its heavily regulated industry, device brands can't rely on pre-launch tactics. In line with FDA regulations, these companies must be extremely careful about medical claims and are unable to prime the market unless they're providing scientific, educational materials that follow strict FDA guidelines. Any pre-launch marketing must be factual and formal, and designed only to explain the labeled usage, techniques, safety and risks associated with the device.

The obstacles don't stop there. Surgeons are extraordinarily risk-averse stakeholders. Understandably so. They like proven

technologies, brands and devices they've had success with in the past. Getting their attention for a new, unproven and unfamiliar device can be nearly impossible, especially if they don't know your brand's name.

While these challenges make marketing difficult, it's not impossible for device brands to take on traditional industry leaders. Challenger device brands must simply take a different approach.

Hold focus groups

Surgeons can play an important role in the development of any device. As a challenger brand, a device must hit a home run with its stakeholders, and what better way to ensure surgeons are on board than to allow them to guide its creation?

In surgeon focus groups, brands can begin talking about a device category and soliciting feedback during the initial design and development process.

Product managers can explain the traditional ways a procedure is done, the limitations of that method and the offering being created. Then, ask for input. Do they see any obvious flaws? Are there barriers that would prevent them from adoption? Do they see the value in the product? What would ultimately convince them? How would they use it?

Focus on education

Medical device brands can't promote a product before getting approval on a submitted Premarket Notification or 510(k) from the FDA, but it's possible to share trial data or research.

Data-driven and science-backed education is the name of the game. Think of it as the difference between a peer-reviewed journal article and a promotional brochure. One educates and the other sells.

Clinical trial data and research can help educate surgeons, using data to show comparisons of existing solutions and how a challenger device could be an improvement over existing solutions. By using research-backed education tactics to reveal gaps and opportunities, the challenger brand can effectively prime thought leaders in the market for its eventual FDA approval and launch.

Research also is an effective way to overcome surgeons' aversions to risk. This market needs to know the challenger brand is designed to be a better offering for both surgeons and patients. By sharing research

that indicates performance, surgeons can take the first step toward interest and trial.

Education can be a powerful tool when approaching investors as well. While an in-depth technical explanation may resonate with surgeons or even patients, this isn't necessarily the best way to reach early-stage investors.

Brands need to adapt the message to convey market and research data, educating investors on the offering's importance, without clouding it with industry jargon.

The investor messaging must answer questions they care about: How much does it cost to make? How much does it cost the patient and the health system?

How much margin is possible? What are the risks? What makes it unique in the market?

Challenger brands must convince investors there is a realistic potential for the offering to earn a percentage of market share as it goes up against incumbents.

Work with thought leaders

Identify the key medical organizations that are influential with your stakeholders and develop a strategy to share research and educate these groups. Having trusted leaders in the industry — with no ulterior business interest — support your research lends credibility to your brand story.

Med device challenger brands can strategically partner with thought leaders by enlisting them to author and share relevant content or inviting them to be spokespeople for media and at industry events.

Keep in mind there's a spectrum of how coordinated these efforts can be. For example, you can work closely with specific thought leaders, carefully mapping out the partnership agreement, or you can share a "toolkit" with brand information and resources and take a more hands-off approach.

Most importantly, the thought leader must maintain their credibility, meaning you'll need to refrain from overprescribed talking points, allow the thought leader to express information in their own voice and stay transparent with your stakeholders.

Creativity is key

Your challenger brand isn't following tra-



Amy Fisher

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Storytelling in the age of the connected customer

How content with a focus on experiences and emotional marketing can keep customers connected and create advocates for your brand.

By Dan Martin and Matthew Briggs

Today's healthcare landscape is rapidly changing. Factors such as wavering legislation, value-based care's impact on the physician model, pressure on pharmaceutical companies to reduce costs, the introduction of wearables to the market and informed consumers are contributing to this evolution. At the same time, audiences — plans, providers, employers, patients — are also changing the way in which they seek information. According to DMN3, 72 percent of Internet users say they searched online for health information within the past year. But the same message is not always appropriate for each of these diversified audiences.

So, what does this constant evolution mean for your healthcare brand, and how can you effectively utilize all that is available for today's marketers to connect with your target audience and grow brand awareness? Employing a strong integrated marketing and PR strategy can be a key move to reach that next step. We distill three pillars inside that strategy — storytelling, brand advocacy, emotional marketing — that, when combined, will help you take the content approach for your healthcare brand to the next level in the age of the connected customer.

Storytelling

Storytelling has become a buzzword in recent years, but stories are still the best way to create stronger connections with key constituents, be they patients, providers, health plans, policymakers or other influencers. Yet, the question many healthcare companies and organizations continue to struggle with is: how do we use stories to create and nurture customer relationships?

The answer is very simple in theory: personalized storytelling. It comes down to listening, learning and engaging with your customers. Take out assumptions and lead your audience along a journey without selling or pushing them. Staying genuine and authentic will increase brand awareness, return higher engagement rates and, ultimately, convert more qualified leads.

Keeping your content honest equates to authentic storytelling. Strive to provide customers with an opportunity to feel like they are part of a larger group. Research from psychologists Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary best describes this need in their "belongingness hypothesis": "People have a basic psychological need to feel closely connected to others, and that caring, affec-

tionate bonds from close relationships are a major part of human behavior."

Emotion-led marketing

Find a way to connect with your customers on a deeper, more emotional level. Do you give them peace of mind? Do you make life easier? Use these triggers to strengthen your relationship and foster loyalty. Enhanced loyalty might be the most impactful outcome of well-done storytelling, leading to more engagement with your brand.

Take, for example, a PAN client who focuses in the biopharma market, specifically the rare disease space. Rather than promote one-off campaigns they have designed and executed on behalf of pharma and biotech companies, or differentiate on the novel treatments they helped commercialize, for the past several years they've used Rare Disease Day to elevate their story. This places the larger focus more holistically on rare disease, making it personal by showcasing the patients and care givers who make up this unique community. Through podcasts, documentary movies, earned, owned and shared media, they have taken their audience down a path via a well-thought out and executed content strategy, one that engages the audience, solicits emotion and, in effect, connects them more closely to the brand. Given that Rare Disease Day typically falls in February, they use this milestone as a jumping-off point to set the tone of their content marketing, PR and communications strategy for the remainder of the year.

Targeting your approach

Personalized storytelling might seem particularly easy when thinking about targeting the patient in the context of a B2C approach. Think of all the relevant ways to showcase the value of benefits, cost and care efficiencies, improved care, wellness, virtual care, chronic condition management, tobacco cessation and many other highly relevant and personal topics.

It can be more challenging on the B2B side, however, when trying to sell into providers or health plans. B2B marketers are increasingly turning to Account-Based Marketing strategies to optimize this approach. ABM is based on setting goals for target accounts and communicating with prospects as a market of one. It's a frontline approach to ensure marketing teams are speaking to individuals in the field, whether they fall in the top, middle or bottom of the sales funnel. The right positioning and

personalization will help you engage your target market and move from awareness to consideration to intent.

An ABM strategy arms your sales team with content that is meaningful to their respective prospects. The key to ABM rests in the collaborative efforts of the sales and marketing teams. To work effectively, both sides need to be aligned and acknowledge the benefits that ABM has to offer: increased ROI, higher degree of personalization, increased conversion potential, improved brand reputation and better customer relationships.

Creating brand advocates

Speaking of building better relationships, look no further than the earned-shared-owned ecosystem to understand how they magnify each other to support an advocacy program that can take your storytelling to the next level. At the end of the day, a big part of your content marketing effort is storytelling, not exclusively how you tell your story, but how those who engage with your brand, products and services tell it. Building brand advocates takes time and resources. It also takes a dedicated approach to nurturing customers' experiences, so they become loyal and willing to testify to your company's vision.

Just as brands build advocates in the B2C space, so too can healthcare brands in the B2B arena. Why? Because it all comes down to a few core tenets: trust, reference and reviews. If you hit on all of these critical elements, you're on the path to building brand loyalists. The winning combination of word-of-mouth marketing, trustworthy recommendations and online "reviews" move a healthcare brand toward higher rates of consideration; therefore, the peer testimonial holds the same weight as it does for consumer brands. The challenge is guiding their passion and honing their experience to funnel into high-quality referrals and, ultimately, drive sales.



Dan Martin



Matthew Briggs

The art of change

PR pros navigating today's complex healthcare world should remember that they serve as guardians of the art of change, and must communicate how healthcare leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the industry's ongoing evolution.

By David Jarrard

A staggering number of exciting innovations are happening in healthcare. Most will fail.

They will fail because, so far, the conversations regarding the change current occurring in healthcare have largely ignored the human element.

The healthcare system is made of people, and people change because of how they feel, not facts they know. Therefore, healthcare leaders looking to change their organizations must convey new tools and processes within the context of human reality. New technologies entering our field are exciting, but no tactical or digital solution will solve a cultural problem.

Our job as healthcare communicators, more than ever, is to be the translator. We must help leaders frame cutting-edge innovation within the boundaries of what's doable. We must build language around the digital revolution that speaks to the heart. Simply put, we are the guardians of the art of change.

What is the art of change?

The science of change is already part of the industry's discourse. The science of the future will be AI, blockchain, machine learning. Now, we're seeing data that makes the case for change: declining inpatient admissions, overuse of emergency departments at hospitals and a cost structure that has gotten out of control. To make the

changes necessary, science will be vital, but nothing happens without the art.

The danger of a less-than-artful approach to change is clear. Doctors, angered at a compensation redesign, have ousted CEOs. Nurses frequently band together to block initiatives. And while they may not be at the top of the food chain, clinicians are the most trusted people within healthcare institutions. Every year Gallup polls show nurses among the most trusted professionals in America. In other words, it's critical to have the people who'll make health systems run — and represent them to the public — on board for transformative work.

But these core employees will reject a recommended pivot if they can't see how it impacts their lives, or they feel like the leader doesn't account for the reality of their jobs.

Here's an example: leaders making the case for a merger don't win the hearts and minds of employees by citing cost efficiencies. Instead, they must explain how the merger enables the system to complete its mission. People back change based on how they feel; they use facts to support the conclusion directed by their feelings.

How to start with the art of change

Communicators guiding healthcare leaders through the art of change can start by walking them through the following high-level steps:

Be emotional. Care about the change; connect the change to your emotions and the emotions of those whose behavior you need to change. If you fail to do so, the emotional part of change still exists. Others will fill in gaps you leave with their own stories, and that will not help your cause.

Emphasize what will stay the same. People have a fundamental emotional need for stability. Even though your proposed change may be sweeping, as you communicate it, include information about what won't change. Even though there's a merger, will your employees keep their jobs? Though you're introducing new technology, will you make sure it won't disrupt the workflow? Do your values remain solid even though there's a leadership shift? If so, say it.

Do more listening than talking. Being heard is often more important than any action that comes from being heard. So, when you're rolling out a major change for your people, set aside time to listen to them. Schedule time for the right stakeholders to talk to you about how they feel.

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



David Jarrard

HEALTHCARE'S CHALLENGER BRANDS

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dition, so why stick to traditional communication tactics? To boost brand awareness and stand out among established competitors, challenger brands may need to get creative. Try a few of these strategies:

Video assets. A compelling video can convey the problem with current market solutions, research or even surgeon testimonials from clinical trials. This approach to education can go a long way in changing stakeholder perceptions and impacting their willingness to engage with your brand.

Experiential marketing. The best way to get surgeons to understand your offering is to get them to interact with it. For example, a physical or virtual cadaver lab could be

the perfect place to let surgeons get up close and personal with a device, seeing the benefits first hand.

Half-day symposiums. Relevant trade shows gather your key stakeholders in the same place at the same time. Take advantage of these opportunities by hosting a half-day symposium before or after the show to officially launch a product (after FDA approval, of course).

Above all, don't be afraid to try new ways of communicating, as long as you stick to the rules for your regulated industry. If you're going to challenge the status quo and fight for market share, you must be willing to be bold, to communicate through channels that others are not and to share your research as often as possible. Challengers, this is no time to be timid.

Amy Fisher is a Vice President in Padilla's technology practice. ○

TURNING TABLES ON INFLUENCE

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sation that has influence and causes ripples to spread ever outward, affecting positive change. If we embrace our core mission to make a difference through health communications — to enable people to make informed decisions through access to information — we will find a way to help clients in the highly-regulated health space find better avenues to social and digital platform use. If not, others will tell their versions — accurate or not — of our stories for us.

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Generation gaps

To reach Baby Boomers, healthcare organizations need to promote an active lifestyle and pay closer attention to local media.

By Liam Collopy

The oldest Baby Boomers turn 72 this year. But don't call them old.

Seventy-four million strong, Baby Boomers, or those born between 1946 and 1964, have redefined every stage of life, from childhood to parenting. So why should aging be any different?

Insurers, healthcare companies and medical providers eager to engage Baby Boomers need to jettison traditional ways of communicating with aging individuals. For Boomers, it's about staying active while at the same time dealing with myriad challenges head-on.

"Baby Boomers are skilled, adept and experienced, so marketers need to use positive words and not make them feel over the hill," said Ann Fishman, Founder of Generational Targeted Marketing and author of "Marketing to the Millennial Woman." "Don't make the content scary or have Boomers think, 'I'd rather have the disease than the cure' because the message spends too much time rattling off all the negative side effects of a medication. You need to communicate with Baby Boomers in a way that shows results."

Fishman, whose clients have included Allstate Financial, American College of Cardiology and *Reader's Digest*, also stressed that marketing communications to Baby Boomers requires a multigenerational effort. While Millennials may know how to distribute and measure marketing campaigns via digital and/or social channels, Baby Boomers should drive the creative to ensure the message resonates with the target audience and nothing gets lost in the translation.

Use of language is crucial when communicating with Baby Boomers because it establishes trust, regardless of the media channel or the product or service being promoted.

Being sensitive to language is just one of several ways that healthcare organizations can sharpen their overall communications catering to this still-influential generation.

Be media-agnostic

To be sure, many Baby Boomers are digitally savvy and live online. However, there are plenty of Boomers — most likely early ones — who prefer to communicate via analog and/or offline platforms. Like any generation, Boomers are not monolithic. A lot depends on an individual's specific healthcare needs and where she resides in the Boomer-age spectrum.

According to a 2017 study conducted by

Brightline Strategies, among people aged 65 and over, 59 percent of the respondents said they use the Internet to research a specific disease or medical condition. Among people between the ages 55 and 64, 53 percent of the respondents said they use the Web for such purposes.

However, percentages drop significantly among Boomers when it comes to using the Internet to speak with a healthcare provider (doctor, nurse, pharmacy, etc.): For people 65 and over, just 39 percent use the Internet to contact a healthcare provider; for people between 55 and 64, about a third of the respondents said they use the Web to contact a healthcare provider.

Against that statistical backdrop, it's important that brands communicate with Boomers via multiple media channels, such as email newsletters, direct mail, online video, banner ads and community outreach.

Digital analytics, of course, will help marketers to distinguish the healthcare needs of one segment of Boomers from another and establish more personalized messaging stemming from how Boomers within each segment consume news and information and through which channels Boomers like to communicate.

Go local

Hospitals, HMOs, pharmacies, assisted living facilities and home healthcare organizations should strongly consider localizing their marketing campaigns because as people age they tend to travel less and stick close to home. Indeed, the global home healthcare market is expected to reach \$517.2 billion by 2025, according to a recent report by Grand View Research, progressing at a CAGR of 7.8 percent during the forecast period.

To cultivate relationships, healthcare organizations could sponsor and host local programs, conferences and events designed to educate Boomers about exercise, diet, and long-term care insurance products, among other healthcare-related topics.

Arranging such events also enables Boomers to meet with their peers, discuss their healthcare concerns and strike up new friendships, which is vital part of staying active as one ages.

Leverage social media channels

It may seem counterintuitive considering that the youngest Boomers are now in their mid-50s, but healthcare organizations catering to Boomers need a robust social

media strategy.

According to Statista, 68 percent of U.S. Baby Boomers use YouTube, which indicates a fairly healthy appetite for online video. Online video, of course, presents tremendous opportunities for marketers to illustrate their products and services. And because Boomers didn't grow up in a 240-character world they won't be discouraged by long-form or serialized videos.

Sixty-five percent of Boomers use Facebook — in keeping with trends showing that older Americans have started to colonize the social network from their younger counterparts.

Fishman said healthcare organizations and medical providers can seriously boost their social media presence by setting up (and steering) Facebook chats catering to Boomers. "Baby Boomers don't want everyone to know their business," she said. "But they are willing to chat [online] with other Boomers who may also be looking for medical advice."

Aside from YouTube and Facebook, Boomers seem cool to the other social channels: Just 21 percent of Boomers use Instagram and 19 percent use Twitter, Statista said.

Serve as a generational conduit

Baby Boomers are also known as the "sandwich generation." To wit, they have kids (and grandkids) but also have parents, many of whom remain quite active while others are on the decline.

Healthcare companies can boost their value by providing Baby Boomers with information and resources to help them locate groups and organizations catering to their parents' medical needs. From a marketing standpoint, this is not to be underestimated because it makes Boomers' lives easier and provides some peace of mind.

Millennials, of course, gravitate toward all things digital. To a large degree, that goes for Gen Xers, as well. Not so for Baby Boomers, who like to communicate through multiple media channels. What truly distinguishes Baby Boomers — and what healthcare organizations must keep top of mind — is that they want straight talk focusing on how they can take better care of their medical needs and those of their extended families.

Liam Collopy is Executive VP of Harden Communications Partners, a Stanton company. ○



Liam Collopy

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Returning value to the value of pharmaceuticals

What drugmakers should consider in their current approaches to healthcare prices.

By Brian Reid

Last summer, when the biopharmaceutical industry was still reeling from President Donald Trump's pivot from on-again, off-again threats to a nascent blueprint regarding how his administration would drive down drug pricing, a grizzled veteran of pharmaceutical communications dropped a critical piece of wisdom.

"There is no such thing as corporate social responsibility programming anymore. The only thing consumers care about from a reputation standpoint is pricing."

It was the distillation of what's increasingly conventional wisdom. By most conventional metrics, healthcare companies should be the nation's most reputable companies. In September, the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* singled out the biopharmaceutical industry as among the most generous. The collective mission of companies in this space — to treat diseases with innovative medicines that reduce pain and disability and prevent death — could not be more noble.

But drugmakers and biotechnology companies don't — and won't — receive full credit for their efforts, or the attendant risks of drug development, as long as the perception exists that the costs of medicines are unsustainable.

Ducking the issue of drug pricing is no longer a viable strategy. Absent a strong defense from innovative companies, the conversation will be steered by those trying to pinpoint blame or, even worse, by trolls purporting to speak for the industry. This summer, a CEO from a fringe maker of generic drugs captured headlines from CNN to the *Washington Post* to the *New Republic* by bragging about a 400 percent price hike for an antibiotic.

It didn't matter that the company wasn't even making the drug in question at the time, or that competitors exist that would make sure such a stunt was meaningless in practice. The media pounced. However, lost in the frenzy was the critical context: drug prices in 2017 barely budged, according to the companies that manage drug spending for health insurance plans. The data are clear: we're now living in an era where medicines are reducing the rate of healthcare spending, not driving it up.

So, what can biopharma companies do?

First, they should understand that con-

troversies around pricing are real, and they come from many different directions. Sometimes, it's patients who are concerned about "financial toxicity," other times it's governments that worry about total costs. There's no single formula for a pricing-related controversy, and drugmakers must be consistently on alert for decisions — including decisions made by others in the healthcare system — that could impact any of their stakeholders.

Second, companies must commit to being transparent. Consumers, policymakers, the media and others have a right to better understand the pricing policies that drugmakers follow, and companies should be able to describe how they bring value to patients and healthcare providers, as well as how they define "value."

That's easier said than done: the wholesale price of a medicine is often vastly different from the price that an insurance company pays, which is different from what the pharmacy pays, and often bears little relation to the actual cost that a patient pays at the pharmacy counter. But beginning to tease that system apart is critical to rebuilding trust.

Third, companies must recognize that more education is needed at every level of the healthcare system. The complexity of the system makes for a lot of misplaced anger — anger that too often flows to the most visible part of the system: the biopharmaceutical companies. Yet, a web of factors impacts the price of every drug, most of which is not communicated well.

Doctors and patients should understand the value of the treatments in ways meaningful to them so they can make smart choices. And consumers must be aware of the impact of the way insurance design has an impact on their bottom line so they can ask the right questions of their employer or insurance plan.

Fourth, companies need to make clear what their principles are and stand by them. Over the past two years, a growing number of companies have made public commitments on issues from transparency, to how they set the price of new drugs, to when and by how much they increase prices, to new and better ways of serving uninsured or underinsured patients.

That kind of leadership is a prerequisite for reinventing corporate responsibility

efforts. It doesn't necessarily pay off in the short term — the media can be skeptical — but, over time, making good on such commitments builds a foundation of goodwill with key stakeholders.

Building a communications program around understanding, transparency, education and action is not solely a question of reputation, though restoring reputation is a clear goal of such a program. It's critical, too, that biopharmaceutical companies make clear that the profits — when there are profits — are used to fuel the engine of innovation. Today's successes make way for tomorrow's cures, even though there's no assurance that the pathway to those cures won't lead to a dead end.

The industry walks a tightrope: a backlash against high healthcare costs erodes reputation, but a pendulum that moves too far in the opposite direction is just as dangerous. Creating new medicines is not easy, fast or cheap. Destroy the ability of companies to earn a reward for that risk and the would-be investors in tomorrow's breakthroughs will decide that funding yet another scooter-sharing service or a robot-run fast casual restaurant is a better use of their capital.

Many companies have already taken steps to begin to address looming questions about the value of pharmaceuticals, both in terms of specific products as well as the health spending implications across the system.

Externally engaging in the topic is not without risks, but those that have developed a strong stance on the issue — as well as a strong backbone in delivering their defense — have begun to have an impact on the public debate.

Now is the time for more companies to join the dialogue, even if the payoff isn't immediate. To paraphrase an old saw, the best time to jump into the value conversation was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now.

Brian Reid is Managing Director, Healthcare and co-leads the Value and Access Practice, at W2O. ○



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Using data for insights that engage, educate patients

Disrupted media cycles have made it more difficult to reach people with accurate, useful health information. Fortunately, we can follow the trail of data breadcrumbs to better understand how conversations are taking place across audiences and how to more effectively engage.

By Ken Deutsch

We encounter new challenges within the health communications sector nearly every day. Publications across the U.S. have lost nearly a quarter of their staff members during the past decade, according to the Pew Research Center. News cycles are becoming increasingly crowded, and “fake news” accounts on social media are actively spreading misinformation about various health conditions.

With fewer reporters covering health news, and a multitude of voices competing for attention, it's now more difficult, and more imperative, to reach audiences like patients with accurate health information. Therefore, communicators must truly understand how their audiences are structured, who these individuals look to for information and how they share information.

The evolving communication landscape

Fortunately, along with their challenges, social media platforms like Twitter offer communicators a window to help better understand key audiences and how conversations within these groups are shaped.

Through their public posts, health audiences are leaving behind a wealth of information on the best ways to reach them and the messages that are resonating. If groups such as patients and advocates are talking about an issue, it's very likely that someone is tweeting about that topic. Increasingly, this is the case on even the most arcane medical issue.

Twitter's success as a communication tool, and as a research resource, lies in its encouragement of people to follow and mention other individuals, and point to web links with further information. Engagement details can help communicators identify which websites and sources of information are most likely to reach which audiences, and the influencers who are most likely to spread key messages on a topic.

With these data, it's possible to develop an effective health communications strategy to move any issue. JPA has been honing its capabilities around leveraging these publicly available discussions to shape communications campaigns for more than a decade.

JPA recently launched Gretel, an insights engine comprised of both objective data collected through the above approach, along with our subjective analysis of the key groups engaged in health issues throughout the world.

Gretel utilizes publicly available data in which we cluster audiences based on data from more than 335 million accounts on Twitter. For any given health topic, we can see 10,000 to 15,000 people who are most influential in that space. The Gretel platform is now composed of millions of data points and continues to capture more data, effectively getting smarter every day. When combined with human intelligence, new insights can be derived. This enables the communication team to develop content and engagement strategies that really resonate.

Take for example the complex ecosystem of vaccines. Using Gretel, JPA quickly separates the trolls and bots from the real people who have concerns about vaccinations. Further, the team identifies the audiences who are most likely to be influenced by the anti-vaccination conversation, and the advocates of vaccines who can best reach those same audiences.

Equally compelling, we identify the language used by each type of stakeholder, such as patients and healthcare providers, so the messages we craft will better resonate with each key audience. Language precision can be the difference between a group of patients or physicians widely sharing a message or dismissing a piece of content almost entirely.

Defining influence and news cycle trends

JPA gains insights into health discussions by understanding their structure. For example, we capture and analyze publicly available information on Twitter related to the structure of health conversations. Through this analysis, we're able to identify the most influential individuals within conversations about specific health topics, and the media outlets they engage with most frequently.

While the structure of conversations is important it's equally important to track the conversation in real-time. This approach often uncovers something unexpected such as related conversations that is gaining the attention of the audience.

For example, a recent *New York Times* front-page story described a controversy on the failure of oncology researchers to disclose contributions from pharmaceutical companies. This article resonated with oncologists and within pharma conversations but, interestingly, did not spark much conversation among cancer patient advocates.

At that same moment in time, cancer patient advocates were focused on Olivia Newton-John, or more specifically on the language used in describing her cancer progression. The language distinction (progression of metastatic disease vs. new cancer diagnosis) discussed in relation to her cancer progression is an important topic for cancer patient advocates, and likely overshadowed the *New York Times* story on financial disclosure. It's likely that this piece would have received attention from advocates, if the timing had been different.

Analysis of the health communications landscape makes it clear that each audience has its own news cycle, distinct from the larger media landscape. When posting content, it's imperative to understand the evolution of the real-time conversation within the audiences you're aiming to reach.

Use metrics to demonstrate success

It's equally important to demonstrate the impact of content with precision. Too often, communicators rely exclusively on metrics such as PR impressions, which can give a sense of overall conversation volume but don't offer insights on the audiences that are discussing a topic. As the communications field becomes increasingly integrated, impressions are being replaced by metrics that directly measure a campaign's resonance within a specific group of stakeholders.

With Gretel, we demonstrate success by:

- Defining key audiences that an initiative is aiming to reach.
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We track in real time the audience of each placement and the reach of each mention in social media. Our approach simplifies a noisy communications landscape. We're able to see if high conversation volume around a topic truly reflects resonance within a community, or is being driven by



Ken Deutsch

Continued on page 24



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Social media's eroding trust hits healthcare companies

The pharmaceutical and biotech world has a reputation problem, and the practice of using social media to engender trust among stakeholders has been beset by its own recent challenges, as those social channels too have now fallen under public scrutiny.

By Chris Iafolla

It's not exactly a well-kept secret that the pharmaceutical and biotech industry isn't among the world's most trusted. This runs in stark contrast to their seemingly noble intentions: to bring new therapies to market that improve people's health.

With such an important mission, why do public trust issues seem to persist for healthcare companies? There are a lot of contributing factors that likely play a role, including perceptions regarding price hikes to access to medicines, but there's no questioning that the pharmaceutical and biotech industry has a reputation issue on its hands.

This is a real business problem. You won't find "reputation" on any balance sheet but it's most certainly something that impacts overall business performance. Look no further than the string of reputation harm that faced United Airlines in 2017. In two separate incidents, one where three passengers were denied boarding due to their attire, and one where a passenger was dragged off the plane after refusing to exit voluntarily, United failed to apologize or even respond in a timely manner. During this period of silence, United's market valuation dropped to the tune of \$1.8 billion. In a matter of days, United had done serious harm to its reputation, its relationship with customers

and ultimately, its business.

Pharmaceutical and biotech companies are taking notice and evaluating how to change the discourse and engender trust with their stakeholders. One area where there's opportunity to develop a different type of relationship is through digital and social media. It offers a more direct line to external stakeholders, an ability to demonstrate empathy and put forward a more human voice for a company. These benefits are well understood but adoption of digital and social media as more than a push marketing channel and a customer service vehicle in pharma remains low.

There are the usual hurdles that slow adoption in this industry. Regulatory and medical guidelines place significant restrictions on what can and cannot be communicated. A risk-averse culture often prevents pushing the envelope to embrace a customer-service mindset on social media. But those hurdles are nothing new. For years, we've dealt with the same restrictions and found ways to effectively communicate through digital and social channels. So, what's changed? Trust. Trust in the companies and trust in the channels themselves.

Over the past 18 months, we've seen the trust in information communicated on social media called into question. What was once seen as a possible ready-made solution to form a more direct relationship with the customer is now facing its own scrutiny and all information is being placed under an intense microscope.

This was driven by a series of high-profile issues that garnered national attention. The first was the widely-held belief that foreign entities used social media to disseminate misinformation during the 2016 Presidential election. This was the first time that the use of social media for nefarious intentions rose to the level of being squarely placed in the national discourse. It caused people to question the legitimacy of content on social media channels and specific scrutiny was placed on content produced by companies as opposed to individuals. Just as this conversation was beginning to shift to the back burner, the Cambridge Analytica scandal broke. This caused more angst amongst pharmaceutical and biotech companies because it involved sensitive data, which in the world of healthcare, is always a hot topic. Put these two issues together, and the

very thing pharma hoped would be a tool in repairing its trust issues ended up becoming a trust issue of its own.

This leaves pharmaceutical marketers in a predicament. Do they abandon the use of social media channels as a customer service mechanism that can help to build and repair public trust? Are the channels themselves a strong headwind against that effort?

Like most things, the answer is murky. What is clear is that social and digital channels can be used to unlock a more direct connection with the audience. A well-thought-out response plan and an escalation procedure that pinpoints who can make decisions quickly allows pharmaceutical and biotech companies to respond on social media in near real-time. This is a far cry from the seemingly impassable chasm that previously existed between healthcare companies and their stakeholders. With the advent of enterprise-ready chat bots and machine learning, we are also now able to take this response protocol beyond simply manual responses based on pre-approved response matrices. These tools allow us to apply the same business process but enable true real-time engagement.

As these tools reach maturity, in order to tap into their true potential, we need to address the thorny question of what does the audience really trust on these channels. There are so many factors that go into trust that it is important to uncover what and why a piece of content is more trusted versus another. It could be the channel itself that is more trustworthy; perhaps users prefer one channel over another as a source of information. It could be that the copy has the greatest impact on effectiveness or the creative that accompanies the content. It could also be the publisher itself and not the channel or content that has the greatest impact on trust. All of these are important variables to understand how to serve content across social media and how public trust plays a role in the efficacy of that content.

Chris Iafolla is Head of Digital and Social Strategy at Syneos Health Communications.



Chris Iafolla

USING DATA FOR INSIGHTS

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other factors, such as a small and vocal group of individuals, or even an overactive bot account. If one were to just measure conversation based on how often a brand or topic is mentioned, it would be very difficult to demonstrate impact with that level of precision.

The breadcrumbs that are left behind by healthcare audiences are the key to understanding and reaching these key stakeholders. While speaking to everyone might be an important goal, making sure you're reaching your targeted audience with compelling messages often creates the greatest results in health communications. Impacting the right people with engaging health communications information is an important step toward helping everyone live healthy and fulfilling lives.

Ken Deutsch is Executive Vice President at JPA Labs and heads JPA Health Communications research and analytics practice. ○

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Communicating evidence in a post-truth world

The challenge of counselling clients around data and science communications in a landscape where appeals to emotion and personal belief are now more influential in shaping public opinion than facts.

By Anne de Schweinitz

It was a steamy August morning on the pavement outside one of the world's premier cancer centers on the Upper East-side of New York, but inside a dear friend was bundled in blankets, with tubes poking from her arm and an IV bag dripping slowly overhead. She looked small and vulnerable, unlike the put-together, opinionated woman I'd known for years. I could see she was worried, but I knew she was in excellent hands. These were some of the best specialists in the world, using the most advanced treatment protocols available anywhere.

As I watched a nurse prep her for surgery, I thought about those doctors and nurses, all their years of study, practical training and dedication to the scientific method. They'd made a recommendation for my friend's treatment plan based on the latest clinical evidence and careful review of multiple scans and tests. They'd weighed the merits of each treatment path, even discussing her case in grand rounds to gain consensus on the best sequence to follow.

As the anesthesia began to work and my friend slowly drifted off, my mind wandered. Do these professionals at the top of their field feel their worldview is under attack? How frequently do patients outwardly question their competence and expertise? Did they join the March for Science last spring to advocate for evidence and objectivity in the face of a culture increasingly driven by emotion and instinct?

The Oxford English Dictionary declared "post-truth" the 2016 Word of the Year, but as 2018 slips away, the concepts of truth, evidence and expertise feel even more threatened.

If, like me, you've spent much of your career working to persuasively communicate scientific and clinical evidence to a range of audiences, these are strange days indeed. I've always believed there's a lot of "art" to science and medicine, but I can't help but feel things have gotten a little out of hand.

Days before her second scheduled surgery, I sent my friend a quick text to ask how she was feeling about round two. She replied that she won't be having surgery; she'd decided not to. What?

Once I got past my exasperation, I did what comes naturally. I searched for all the studies and clinical guidance I could find online, in the hopes she'd follow her doctor's advice and have the surgery as planned. I

hunted for data to persuade her, but also to validate my own belief that these world-class doctors are far better qualified to make this decision than we are.

I know there's no 100 percent in science, but in this case, the data is strong. If only I could educate her a little more — fill her with deeper knowledge and understanding of the science (the "deficit model" of science communication) — she'd surely come around to what I see as the only rational decision.

But when I called the next day, I learned that she too has done some homework and found doctors at another major cancer center who backed her decision to skip the surgery. She found experts to assure her that the second surgery wouldn't likely impact her long-term outcome. Some would call this seeking a second opinion, but, during mid-treatment, it didn't strike me this way.

We each have our unique way of making decisions, of processing information and weighing our options. We bring all our experiences and cultural beliefs to the table. What seems irrational to me may be straightforward and obvious to another, nothing new there. But it seems we've gotten very good at finding backup for our existing beliefs, rather than trusting the objectivity and reason of science and expertise.

I still sometimes hear scientific, clinical and regulatory staff — and the occasional CEO — urge their marketing and communications colleagues to "let the data speak for itself." Thankfully, this is increasingly rare. Most know that, without context, the same data will say something very different to each audience we're trying to reach.

In this post-truth era, we'd be wise to remember some basics as we counsel our teams and clients around data and science communications:

Put the story in context. How does the information you're sharing reconcile with your audiences' existing beliefs or understanding? Is it a major leap forward or a smaller, but significant, contribution to the body of evidence? What else is going on that makes this new information important?

Describe the implications. Because of these findings, what else changes? What should be considered that wasn't before? What new questions arise as a result of this new evidence? If you don't lay out the impli-

cations, others may do it for you.

Focus on the impact story. You must deeply understand your audience(s) to know how the scientific advancement, study results or milestone will ultimately benefit them now or in the future. What does this mean for someone just like them? Show the impact for another person in their shoes.

Lastly, in this current environment, it's critical for all of us in health and science communications to be both specialists and generalists. Going deep on a topic lets us understand and communicate complex information. But we can't do our jobs well without being acutely aware of the wider political, social and cultural landscape at play. We need to take the time to consider — and perhaps even empathize with — the full range of perspectives contributing to the era in which we're living.

My friend is feeling healthy these days. Her hair has grown back and she stands firmly behind her decision to forego the second surgery. I feel a little less easy about it all. But I'm more convinced than ever that better communication is key to ensuring that evidence and science remain at the core of decision-making in our post-truth world.

Anne de Schweinitz is Global Managing Director for Healthcare at FleishmanHillard. ○



Anne de Schweinitz

PR news brief

Sirius XM to acquire Pandora

Sirius XM announced that it intends to acquire Internet radio provider Pandora.

The all-stock transaction, which was unanimously approved by both companies' board of directors, has been pegged at approximately \$3.5 billion. The deal is expected to close during 2019's first quarter.

The world's largest radio streaming service, Pandora provides both free and paid music streaming to more than 70 million monthly listeners, approx. six million of whom are paid subscribers.

Pandora earlier this year acquired digital audio tech firm AdsWizz. In October 2015, it purchased live events company Ticketfly.

In a press release, Sirius CEO Jim Meyer said the acquisition would diversify the streaming company's revenue streams, broaden its technical capabilities and expand its efforts to reach new listeners, creating "significant opportunities to drive innovation that will accelerate growth beyond what would be available to the separate companies," in a way that "benefits consumers, artists, and the broader content communities."

The New York-based satellite radio giant, which currently owns a 15 percent stake in Pandora, boasts more than 36 million subscribers in North America.



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Marketers shift approach to embrace women's health

A new movement is encouraging women to make their health and self-care a priority.

By Wendy Lund

With women accounting for 80 percent of healthcare spending, it's critical that the healthcare industry gain a deeper understanding of what drives the health habits of this extremely influential demographic. But it's not that simple. Not only do women tend to put their own health on the backburner, many say they don't even have time to listen to health-related messages. That's according to recent surveys of almost 1,350 women, which found that fewer than half of the respondents were willing or able to make time for their own health check-ups and screenings, yet excel at taking care of their families' health.

These surveys are a key component of the #BeHealthier movement, which was launched earlier this year by *Redbook* magazine; HealthyWomen, the nation's leading independent health information source for women; and GCI Health, an integrated communications agency built around and inspired by the ever-changing face of healthcare, to explore the well-being habits of women ages 30-60. The goal of *Healthier* is to help women make self-care a priority so they can become a "healthier her" for themselves and their families.

The key takeaway from this research for marketers is that it's finally time to begin shifting their approach to one that embraces that women are the gatekeepers of the health of their family units, and their own health often comes behind that of their families. How can marketers simplify their messaging to truly affect this behavior?

When marketing to women, healthcare marketers need to understand where this woman is in her life and how she is juggling competing priorities — and health sometimes doesn't even make it into the top 10. This aligns with the time when transitions in their health begin to take hold and they actually need to focus on their health more; therefore, it's critical for healthcare marketers to reach her and deliver the messages and education that she needs during these transitional years.

However, because of where the woman is in her life, it's difficult for her to pay attention to messages, and difficult for marketers to break through to her — especially if she isn't going to the doctor. But the good news is that these women are open to self-help expertise. In the time they do have, they're actively seeking information. It's critical that healthcare marketers understand everything these women have going on in

their lives so they can effectively communicate with them and educate them — on their terms.

Key findings from the survey

Women are overwhelmingly the ones in charge of their families' healthcare. In the *Healthier* survey, almost 83 percent of women said they were happy to be the ones calling the shots, and about 70 percent felt they handled their kids' health "very well."

But when it comes to taking care of themselves, more than 30 percent are not making time for things like regular health screenings.

Eighty percent felt they couldn't delegate their families' healthcare; 40 percent said doing so would simply be too complicated. And while younger women were twice as likely to have someone they could ask for help, they were no more likely to do it.

This means, though, that women also shoulder what sociologists call the "worry work": all the planning and anticipating of their families' needs. The result is stress: more than 90 percent of the women in the survey described their stress levels as "moderate to high," with almost 40 percent indicating they had been diagnosed with anxiety or depression.

Most survey takers said it was lack of minutes rather than money that kept them from getting their checkups. Younger women were 10 percent less likely to get basic screenings and 10 percent more likely to say they put their kids' care before their own.

While the women surveyed expressed concerns about things like reproductive health and Alzheimer's disease, those who weren't making time for regular screenings worried more about everything, from their stress levels to their eating habits to whether they'd get cancer.

Key tips for healthcare marketers

Redefine "balance." Work-life balance is a buzz word today. Healthcare marketers must begin shifting that conversation to include health. It's impossible to strike a work-life balance without the health aspects of taking care of ourselves.

Support physicians' offices that cater to women's schedules/priorities. Women are seeking out physicians who offer some basic policies: same-day visits, short wait times for routine checkups, and online appointment making/access to health records. Implement programs that help physicians offer this to their patients as a value add.

Accept that their health may never be first to their families and communicate to

them with this knowledge. Offer women tools that help them simplify and prioritize the health of the entire family unit (including themselves), understanding that their management of their family's health is a key priority.

Understand what is feasible. Understand barriers to compliance. If a healthcare regimen is too much of a burden, women are simply not going to do it. Offer tools and resources to physicians and their patients on how to incorporate treatment/management into their patients' busy lives.

This change cannot start and stop with individual women. The *Healthier* research found that 77 percent of women indicated that their job schedules were the primary barrier to taking the time needed for regular screenings and necessary healthcare. As healthcare marketers, we need to challenge leaders in our industry and across the business sector with a call-to-action to create workplaces that encourage well-being and empower women to take care of themselves. Employers have the power — and an obligation — to make these changes. Not only will it benefit their employees and families, but it will benefit employers too: research shows that healthier and happier employees are more productive and motivated employees.

Wendy Lund is CEO of GCI Health. ○



Wendy Lund

PR news brief

Joele Frank places takeover order at Sonic

Oklahoma City-based Sonic Corp, America's largest drive-in restaurant chain noted for its "made-to-order American classics" served by Carhops, is using Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher for media work in connection with its \$2.3 billion acquisition by Inspire Brands of Atlanta.

Inspire's \$43.50 bid represents a 19 percent premium over the closing price of Sonic's stock on Sept. 24. Pat Brown, CEO of Inspire, called Sonic a "highly differentiated brand" and an "ideal fit" for his company's portfolio of fast-food brands.

Sonic earned \$52.6 million on \$311.8 million nine-month (ended May 31) revenues. Founded more than 65 years ago, Sonic has more than 3,600 drive-ins.

CEO Cliff Hudson said the Inspire agreement followed a "comprehensive review of a wide range of strategic options to maximize shareholder value."

Matthew Sherman, Andrew Siegel and Aaron Pash of JFWBK represent Sonic.



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Meaningful relationships are key to PR success

PR professionals in today's healthcare world are tasked with providing deeper, more strategic evaluations of our clients' target audiences. We can do that by developing personal, meaningful connections with people that are built on shared interests and demonstrate trust, credibility and an understanding of what they need.

By Maria English

How would you describe your job as a PR professional to a friend, relative or neighbor? Would you talk about tactical communication? Would you say that you help healthcare organizations get their messages out to the market?

Those explanations would certainly be truthful. But the problem is that they're only half-truths. And in many ways, they completely miss the point. A one-size-fits-all "get the message out" approach to today's sophisticated healthcare consumer simply isn't enough.

With the seemingly endless number of channels and tactics now available to reach your audiences, PR is no longer about pushing out broad, blanket messages to anyone who will listen. Rather, it's about developing a strategic push/pull communication combination that reaches the right people and builds meaningful connections with them.

So, what does that mean, exactly?

It means understanding the distinction between talking at the market and engaging it in two-way dialogue. In other words, the job of today's PR professional can best be summed up in a powerfully human way: we are relationship builders.

Use shared interests to build value

As our world changes, we must also change the way we think about PR and engage with that world. The task at hand is to build solid relationships by generating a sense of relevancy, trust and credibility among those in the market whom we want to reach.

This is no small feat in today's climate, where distrust of media and other major institutions is at an all-time high. According to the 2017 Reuters Institute Digital News Report, for example, people across nine countries — including the U.S. — commonly perceive bias, spin and agendas within the news media.

Against this backdrop, successful healthcare PR requires a much deeper, more strategic evaluation of both the target audiences and the healthcare organizations themselves. Alignment is key. Effective PR is really about figuring out how to contribute significantly to the lives of others — i.e., your audience — in a distinct way that understands what they need.

This is done by acknowledging the two key components of every relationship: shared interests and value. As PR professionals, we must dance a continuous two-step: first step to discover the interests shared by our clients and their audiences; second step to enrich the conversation around those interests.

Let's take a closer look at each step.

Step 1: uncover shared interests

This requires an honest look at who the client is from a business perspective, and what value they provide to target audiences.

The only way to do that effectively is to take a strategy seat at the table. That is to say, we as PR professionals must build strong relationships with the healthcare clients we represent. It's essential to devote time to regular dialogue with multiple stakeholders across the business. Conversations should center around their business vision, their near- and long-term goals, and their expectations around how marketing and PR will help achieve their objectives.

Likewise, we need to thoughtfully scrutinize and understand who the target audience is at their core. We must look closely at their needs, motivators, behaviors, and preferences. When, where and how do they want to be reached?

Focus groups, social listening tools, ongoing analytics and other research can help reveal where a client's interests intersect with those of its audience. Just as important, these tactics can point the way toward campaigns that encourage the kind of two-way conversations that start to nurture trust.

Socrates once said: "To know thyself is the beginning of wisdom." We must help clients understand who they are, what they offer and the value they provide to the broader market, public and world. Too often, however, healthcare organizations fail to take a strategic look at the global value they provide and answer their audience's #1 question: "Why should we care?"

Step 2: enrich the value conversation

A recent Gallup poll notes that 71 percent of Americans say the U.S. healthcare system is "in a state of crisis" or "has major problems," a statistic that has remained rel-

atively unchanged over the past decade. It doesn't matter whether your client targets a B2B or a B2C healthcare audience; this is a significant public perception hurdle to overcome in the quest to strengthen relationships.

In fact, this perception makes it imperative for clients to communicate authentically about the value they deliver. They must demonstrate not only how their products and services improve healthcare tactically, but how they also benefit people more globally.

Consumers are savvy. They have high expectations of the organizations and brands they select, and it's not just product features and services that win business. Very often, the reason a deal closes has as much — or more — to do with deep emotional connections created by a company's passion, mission and vision. This can all be fostered through communication that is personal, meaningful and relevant.

At the end of the day, healthcare organizations must "keep it real" with a clear understanding of where their audiences are and the motivators that drive them. They must speak to why consumers should care about their offering more than anyone else's offering. The challenge, of course, is that it takes time and effort to demonstrate value through authentic and genuine content.

Commitment: the key to lasting loyalty

There's no way around it: professional relationships must be nurtured just as carefully as personal relationships. They require dedication and commitment. But the return on this "effort investment" is loyalty.

In a healthcare market crowded with content, real relationships built on shared interests and demonstrated value can cut through the clutter and build brand loyalty like nothing else can. For those PR specialists who are willing to act as matchmaker, the opportunity to build lasting relationships can go a long way toward both professional success and personal satisfaction.

Maria English is Vice President, Account Management at MERGE Atlanta. ○



Maria English



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Preparing a medical crisis management plan

Why counting the number of rows to the nearest exit could be the way to save your client's reputation.

By Sharon M. Reis

Travel experts tell us that one of the best things you can do to save yourself in a plane crash is to count the number of rows to the nearest exit, program those numbers into your brain and then make an escape plan in case of the unthinkable.

We all know airplanes are among the safest forms of travel and that a plane crashing is highly unlikely. Yet we can learn from this lesson of preparedness: once the cabin is filling with smoke, it's too late to develop your plan. The environment is absolute chaos and your brain is frozen in fear. But if you already have a plan, one that only took a few seconds to create at the start of your flight, your chance of survival increases dramatically. You anticipated a potential emergency — or imagined the unimaginable — and you planned how to get off a burning plane in 90 seconds or less.

In a sudden media crisis, you'll likely have a bit more time to respond, but the basic approach is the same. For every one of our clients who want to generate proactive earned media stories, we recommend preparing an issues management plan. Most clients are comfortable with this idea, yet many shy away out of fear of looking at uncomfortable issues or fear that they can't anticipate all scenarios.

Many medical associations and non-profits don't have budgets to support ambitious issues management and ongoing crisis support. And that's one of the best reasons for developing a plan upfront. Our job is to expect the unexpected, plan for the unplanable and prepare for the unknown. While many clients don't want to talk about the worst possible scenarios, we encourage them to imagine them, write them down and create responses. Only by acknowledging the potential threats can we plan for them and survive them.

Medical societies are increasingly under scrutiny about relationships with industry, and we frequently remind them that creating transparency around outside funding is an important aspect of issues management. A medical society, long admired as a leader in the field, was questioned by an investigative journalist about funding for the organization. Unfortunately, the society's latest list of funders and conflict-of-interest and disclosure policies were not posted on their web site. By not keeping the web content updated, this unfortunate over-

sight turned into a "gotcha" moment for a hard-charging reporter who questioned the association in the media. It was a big lesson learned. Always, always, always post, update and prominently display your funders and conflict-of-interest and disclosure policies on your web site.

In today's environment, any research that is supported by industry is immediately questioned, which means a scientist's reputation that took decades to build could face intense scrutiny in a matter of minutes. All relationships with industry must be fully acknowledged up front with serious consequences for non-disclosure. Therefore, planning for these challenges and having clear disclosure policies is a must whenever scientific endeavors are involved.

Another good piece of advice for surviving a plane crash is wearing the right shoes. We equate that to starting with a solid foundation. Do your homework. Conduct market research, which can be done on a shoestring budget and include message testing and a media audit.

One of our foundation clients was getting ready to introduce a new strategic plan and new criteria for grant-making. They knew that while some of the current grantees would still receive funding under the new direction, others would experience cuts. So, we recommended talking to the grantees, learning what was on their mind and identifying their biggest fears associated with decreased funding. Only by anticipating these concerns could we take the time to think about the implications, develop a plan to mitigate any challenges and soften the landing.

Another important element of an issues management plan is knowing what not to do. In an emergency, do you leap toward the exit door that you see first in front of you or do you check to learn whether the exit behind you is a better choice? There will be times when it is in the best interest of the organization to not respond directly to a critic. Consider the following: Does your potential adversary have more to gain from your organization responding to their issue? Will it bolster credibility to their side of the equation? Will your response add fuel to the flames? It is essential to outline scenarios that do not warrant action so you don't make your situation worse by heading toward the wrong exit.

Taking a proactive approach to issues

management helps organizations to:

- Identify a potential trend or vulnerability in the environment that could negatively impact an organization's reputation or its positioning with key audiences.

- Use research to anticipate how important stakeholders will react to different messages, materials and channels.

- Identify potential friends, foes and fence-sitters in earned and social media and among stakeholder groups.

- Control the message, prepare spokespersons and effectively manage issues before they become crises.

Our team has worked closely with associations, foundations, corporations and non-profits to identify and manage important issues and bolster their reputations. These efforts require a plan of the possible scenarios and responses that are grounded in research.

To assure your survival, plan ahead, sort through the chaos now and make sure that you wear the right shoes.

Sharon M. Reis is Principal with The Reis Group, a Washington, D.C.-based public relations firm focused on healthcare and social causes. She can be reached at SReis@TheReisGroup.com. ○



Sharon M. Reis

PR news brief

Salesforce CEO makes time for Time

Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff and his wife, Lynne, are buying *Time* magazine for \$190 million cash from Meredith Corp, which acquired the Time Inc. magazine properties in January.

The new owners promise to stay away from the day-to-day operations and editorial direction of the magazine.

Meredith president Tom Harty said Meredith is "pleased to have found such passionate buyers in Marc and Lynne Benioff for the Time brand," which reaches 100 million print and online readers monthly.

The Benioffs said in a statement they are honored to be the "caretakers of one of the world's most important media companies and iconic brands."

"Time has always been a trusted reflection of the state of the world, and reminds us that business is one of the greatest platforms for change," they said.

Meredith continues to look for buyers for *Sports Illustrated*, *Fortune* and *Money* to focus on its roster of women's magazines.



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If you want to raise money, raise your visibility

An integrated communications approach is invaluable for emerging healthcare companies looking to pursue an IPO.

By Stephanie Carrington

In the biotech arena, raising capital to fund R&D is mission critical. Given the current level of noise and the sheer volume of biotech companies seeking capital, getting attention and differentiating your company to potential investors is becoming increasingly more challenging. Dedicated healthcare investors receive numerous inbound inquiries from multiple companies every day. Thus, implementing a strategy to raise your profile is more critical than ever.

You may have compelling science and intriguing preclinical or clinical data, but if only a narrow audience knows about it, you'll have a hard time reaching your financing goals. On a daily basis, executive teams are faced with numerous demands on their time as a part of managing the day-to-day operations of an emerging life science company. It's no wonder that raising your visibility to a broader array of targeted stakeholder audiences, inclusive of the investment community and potential partners, is often put on the back burner.

The integrated communications team at ICR Healthcare was recently tasked with such a challenge by a European immunotherapy company that was seeking to raise a significant financing round with healthcare investors in the U.S. and Europe. Like many life science companies, part of the challenge and the opportunity was that the client had little to no name recognition in the US outside of the scientific community.

The ICR team implemented a proactive strategic investor and public relations plan over a 12-month period ahead of the raise.

As part of the onboarding process, the ICR team conducted an environmental scan of news media, sell-side analyst reports and social media to assess how the company's share of voice compared to that of its peers in the immunotherapy space. Other than some radar blips surrounding one or two scientific publications over the prior two-year period, there were long dry spells where the company was not in the public eye while its peers were actively communicating news flow and engaging in social media. Furthermore, the company's message was not focused and senior leaders were not engaging with external audiences in a purposeful way, leaving potential investors and the media confused as to what the company was trying to achieve.

Working in close collaboration with management, ICR mapped out a comprehensive game plan. The first step was to develop a

focused narrative that clearly communicated the value of the company's science and its advanced position in the immuno-oncology space relative to its peers. Nice to have but non-essential messages that didn't directly support the value narrative were ruthlessly excluded from the conversation. The company's communications vehicles, including the website and corporate presentation deck, were revamped to focus more narrowly on near-term value drivers and clear differentiators.

This privately held company had a fairly conservative corporate culture and preferred to limit the issuance of press releases only to the most significant milestones and data readouts. To compensate, greater emphasis was placed on educating key audiences on the company's science through desk side briefings and leveraging the news flow from other companies in the space (aka "newsjacking") to keep the client in the public eye in between press releases by garnering inclusion in stories written by high profile biotech and financial media reporters.

In parallel, we mapped out an investor targeting strategy to cultivate interest from the top healthcare venture capitalists and crossover institutional investors. We prepared a comprehensive investor targeting analysis taking into consideration competitive intelligence and available data on each fund's investment history and team. In the beginning, only a handful of investors were interested in meeting with management, given their limited knowledge about the depth and breadth of the company's pipeline, its clinical and preclinical data and its fully integrated manufacturing capabilities.

It took a fair amount of investor education, direct outreach and close coordination with the management team to build investor awareness and line up introductory meetings in various key cities over a period of several months. We gathered insights from the investors post meeting and provided feedback to the management team in order continually refine communications the company's differentiated investment thesis in the crowded immuno-oncology arena.

Concurrently, we implemented a game plan to cultivate relationships for the executive team with the underwriting teams and sell-side analysts at investment banks active in the sector, which contributed in part to the team receiving invitations to present at upcoming healthcare investor conferences. We also proactively sought out speaking op-

portunities at both banker sponsored and top tier paid for healthcare investor conferences. Leveraging management's presence at top tier medical meetings, such as ASCO, proved to very useful to garner the attention of the oncology focused funds.

As the plan implementation progressed, these prospective investors began to recognize the company's name as the media stories and sell-side analyst reports were generated, as well as by the fact that word began to spread through the investor circles about the planned raise.

In the end, despite fierce competition for attention in the very crowded immuno-oncology space, the company successfully raised its profile and garnered significant investor interest. Ultimately the management team successfully advanced a handful of investors into the private financing due diligence process that culminated with the Company closing of a sizeable Series A round. The proactive integrated communications strategy was beneficial on multiple fronts, proving that an "always-on" communications approach can help emerging healthcare companies reach their financing goals.

Stephanie Carrington is Managing Director at ICR. ○



Stephanie Carrington

PR news brief

ICR acquires Continuum Health Communications

ICR has acquired Continuum Health Communications, the integrated PR shop founded by Terri Clevenger.

Launched in 2006, CHC handles PR, advocacy relations and programming, corporate communications, core positioning and messaging, product launches and patient education, working with clients in the life sciences, specialty pharma, med tech and healthcare IT sectors. It will become a part of ICR's healthcare practice and be branded as Continuum Health – An ICR Company.

Prior to starting CHC, Clevenger co-founded DxInsights, consulted at Genentech and worked as executive VP at WeissComm Partners.

West Westport, CT-based CHC has worked AccentHealth, Genentech, McKesson, Amgen, Sanofi Aventis, Biogen and Nova Seek.

John Mills oversees ICR's healthcare unit.

ICR ranks number-five on O'Dwyer's rankings of independent firms with 2017 fees of \$63.4 million.



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Consumers want healthcare leaders to take a stand

Healthcare companies must go beyond traditional PR tactics and take a stand on social issues if they want to connect with today's conscious consumer.

By Maura Bergen

According to the 2018 Cone/Porter Novelli Purpose Study, 87 percent of Americans feel the health and wellness industry must have a sense of purpose. Not surprising for an industry that has such a personal impact on so many.

Had we conducted this same survey a few years ago, the results may have been different. However, consumer attitudes and behaviors are changing, and so too are their expectations.

They expect companies to take a stance on social issues.

They expect companies to have and lead with purpose.

They expect companies to anticipate and address their needs, today and tomorrow.

No small feat, yet this sense of urgency from consumers has still not translated into action for some health brands. How can we be the partner our clients need to rise to the challenge and meet these growing demands? The answer lies beyond traditional PR tactics.

Today's health environment is full of complexities, and so is the world. We must push our clients to step outside their comfort zone and stand up for the right issues. It's common knowledge that pharmaceutical companies are center stage when it comes to equitable access to affordability of potentially life-saving medicines, medical devices, technologies and vaccines.

However, in the undeniably tumultuous times we're living in — fraught with an unprecedented level of political and environmental uncertainties and social justice challenges — no issue is off-limits. Even an issue that transcends a company's immediate operational footprint.

The 2018 Cone/Porter Novelli Purpose Study found that 71 percent of American consumers expect companies to connect with them emotionally on issues that matter to them personally — whether it's access to healthcare, racial equality, sexual harassment or gun control.

For the highly-regulated health industry, it's become increasingly difficult to sit on the sidelines. Taking a stand on issues of consumer interest is paramount to creating and sustaining brand equity and trust.

To help our clients do this, we must compel them to act and support them in tackling issues head-on through bold and authentic campaigns that are empathetic and — perhaps most importantly — supported

by business actions.

With choice and control more often in the hands of consumers, we must help our clients define and demonstrate why their brands matter. While the consumerization of health has been driven in part by Millennials, the socially conscious consumer is quickly becoming the norm.

Nearly nine in 10 (88 percent) American consumers say they would buy a product from a company leading with purpose. Purpose-driven brands also engender a deep loyalty which means brand advocates will not only try new items (75 percent), but pay more (57 percent) just to lend support to their favorite companies.

What's important to note is that purpose is more than just a mission statement or a commitment of values. It's what defines an organization's authentic role and value in society and allows it to simultaneously grow its business and positively impact the world. To be successful, it must be deeply embedded within the organization, the brand and the experience that's delivered.

We are helping our clients to do just this by assessing their brand's unique role in society, defining and articulating their purpose and ensuring that it's both activated externally and embedded internally within the company's operations and business practices. CVS took a stand back in September 2014, becoming the first national retail pharmacy chain to stop selling tobacco products in all owned stores because it conflicted with the organization's purpose of helping people on their path to better health. Since then, CVS has continued helping people lead tobacco-free lives by investing in and working with leading anti-tobacco and youth organizations to support education, advocacy and healthy behavior initiatives to move the nation towards a tobacco-free generation.

The benefits of having and leading with purpose go beyond consumer loyalty and revenue. It also makes companies more attractive to prospective talent, with more than two-thirds (68 percent) of Americans saying they would work for purpose-driven companies.

Social media and technology are enabling open, direct and two-way communication with consumers. Now more than ever, we must ensure our clients are connecting with their audiences through the right media at the right time to be heard. The health

industry has big shoes to fill. With businesses like retail and beauty charting the course, consumers have grown accustomed to personalization and immediacy, getting what they want, and when and where they want it.

For an industry that has only in the last decade or so come around to the idea that a "one-size-fits-all" model is unsustainable, this way of thinking has required a complete shift in mindset. Digital advancements have afforded us the ability to take personalized care to new heights and create connected experiences that integrate seamlessly into consumers' everyday lives.

As communicators, we need to bring this same forward-thinking approach to message development and dissemination that many health companies are applying to the innovative products and solutions they design.

Helping our clients to define and articulate their purpose is only half the battle. To drive behavior change, it must be communicated through platforms that reach and resonate with key stakeholders. These vehicles will continue to change with advancing technology and shifting consumer interests, requiring Porter Novelli to stay nimble and tuned in to respond to their evolving needs today and tomorrow.

Expectations are growing, yes, but so are our opportunities to drive purposeful action. We have a responsibility to our clients — and to the customers and consumers they serve — to keep purpose and people at the center of our work.

Maura Bergen is an Executive Vice President and the U.S. Health Lead for Porter Novelli. ○



Maura Bergen

PR news brief

WPP merges Y&R, VML

WPP in September announced the merger of iconic ad agency Young & Rubicam with digital marketing shop VML as new CEO Mark Read puts his mark on the ad/PR combine.

Set to officially debut in 2019, VMPLY&R will feature Y&R's creative and brand advertising savvy and VML's digital expertise to offer integrated communications services to clients.

Jon Cook, VML chief, will helm the merged shop and report to Read. David Sable, ex-global head of Y&R, will support Cook.

Read said VMPLY&R, which will have more than 7,000 staffers, is an important step in his effort to build a simpler WPP, where clients have easy access to its range of services.



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PR and the healthcare startup

The more experience a PR agency has with startups, the more likely it can ensure your communications goals align with your business operations.

By Thomas Graham

As a healthcare entrepreneur, odds are your formidable expertise doesn't extend into public relations. While patient-care practitioners are typically excellent communicators, those in other fields may not have as many opportunities to use and polish their communications techniques outside of industry or technical conferences.

But even excellent communicators need to know when and what to communicate to whom, how (what medium), why and where. This strategic process requires more groundwork than you may expect. That's where a PR agency comes in.

Why PR? And why now?

Public relations practitioners are adept at assessing strengths and weaknesses, including personnel assets. Navigating your company to this point required you to apply your engineering or science brilliance to entrepreneurial ingenuity. You likely hired business and financial advisors, and perhaps sales and marketing professionals, to advise you on concept feasibility and investment potential.

Many of the brilliant technical minds behind today's most promising startups lack one key factor that can greatly impact the success of their new company: the ability to communicate to non-technical people. Yet, that ability is a must-have skill, and one that is not so easily developed.

You understand the intricate detail of how a device works and fully comprehend the most complex algorithms and chemical formulas, but can you explain them in laymen's terms?

Artful communications tells the story of how your company will change lives. This artistry is critical to building brand awareness, establishing your sales funnel, obtaining funding to take you to your next threshold and preparing for crises.

Here are just a few ways an experienced agency can help you.

Know when to seek attention, and from whom. We get it. You've put in the sweat for a few years, at great personal (and maybe financial) expense. You have a product — maybe one that's past the beta stage. Early adopters or other first-phase indications are promising. You're ready to tout the promises of your future success to the world!

Not so fast. Press coverage isn't always a good idea, especially for a young organization — and especially in our digital news world. A solid, experienced agency will steer you toward the right channel at the

right time. Perhaps industry analyst meetings or desk-side editorial introductions are the proper first move. Just like your business plan needed to be grounded in a solid foundation, so must your communications strategy.

Attract new investment. Most healthcare businesses are capital-intensive, and time-to-market or commercialization may be years away. Despite your success in attracting early funding rounds, additional investment can be challenging. Detailing your story to an investment banker with limited exposure to medical technology and terminology is different than to a venture capitalist who specializes in your field — and the banker is not looking for a share in your company. It's not enough to know your product; you must sell your vision and your team, clearly articulating both the value proposition of your product and the ability of your team in a well-organized and concise way that piques their interest enough to get to the due diligence stage.

Ideally, you will find an agency with both healthcare and banking/financial experience.

Build your brand. Building a brand is more than the perfect logo. It begins with your value proposition and is built from the inside out. Your internal culture must match the external persona the public sees. Successful brand building can take years, but starting out right is an important critical step. Don't just look for agencies with flashy design teams; look for one with experience in employee communications, community relations, team-building experience and certifications such as Bleiker Consent Building.

Crisis preparation. Let's start with one undeniable tenet: you will have a crisis. How you handle it can be a starting point for how you're remembered for years to come — everything you've done right prior to that crisis won't matter if you bungle your response.

We have a saying: the public will forgive a mistake, but they won't forgive a leader who doesn't own it by acknowledging, apologizing and improving. It's not enough to have a plan; you have to account for every possible thing that can go wrong, and then practice it. We've seen companies emerge from a crisis even stronger than before.

Additional tips

Find an agency that understands your space. Hiring a PR professional solely based on her client headlines is useless if

she doesn't understand the challenges of healthcare tech, such as whether your targets are in rural areas with limited broadband access, or personal device data regulations.

Insist on startup experience. Startups lack history, and this can leave agencies floundering: How can they evaluate your past PR performance when you've been in stealth mode for two years? The experienced PR professional will seize the opportunity to "start from scratch," working alongside you as an extension of your business and operations team (an alignment that should occur across public relations strategies for organizations of all sizes).

Don't fight the focus. Startup executives are consummate multitaskers, but you also know distractions can veer you away from the big picture. Now you're about to have one more competing element: your PR agency. Trust that your PR counsel will not ask you to divert your attention from your other critical tasks if it wasn't important; you hired them to do a job and there are some facets of that work, especially when starting a new program, that require your focused attention to get the ball rolling.

Don't diminish PR's role. Public relations is a business function. Effective PR agencies take the time to read your business and marketing plans to ensure they align your communications goals with your business operations. (Hint: ask them what their first step is during your initial interview). Not only does this prevent your sales and PR teams from working against each other, but it also ingrains a culture early on that PR is essential in business. While that's true for any company, it's particularly true in healthcare.

If you're new to the PR world, remember that communication is a two-way street: you and the media need each other. This give-and-take mindset requires building a relationship, and the best relationships are developed over time. Being an active participant in the foundation that your agency is building for you will give you greater trust in that foundation and the patience to wait for the results for your combined efforts.

Thomas Graham is Founder, President and CEO of Crosswind Media & Public Relations, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary. ○



Thomas Graham



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Why great 'hospital marketing' is just great marketing

Marketers play a critical role in helping hospitals and health systems achieve their business objectives, and are finally being leveraged more thoroughly, allowing access for these organizations to interact with the communities they serve.

By Chris Bevolo

Those of us who've been hanging around hospitals and health systems for any amount of time know that marketing hasn't always been valued or practiced in a way to drive actual revenue or business in our organizations. Of course, that's been changing, and in our latest book, *Joe Public III: The End of Hospital Marketing*, we explore how leading marketing organizations in our space are driving business with their efforts, leading to the end of "hospital marketing" (the "end" meaning no longer considering hospital marketing as something lesser — less sophisticated, less progressive, less effective — than marketing in other industries).

In the book, we used the tried-and-true definition of marketing that contains the four "P's" — product, place, price and promotion — to demonstrate how we've progressed in this area. It's this last P that the vast majority of health system marketers have been focused on, and it's the emergence of our role driving the other three that helps reflect how, finally, marketing is being more thoroughly leveraged to drive business objectives in hospitals and health systems.

For those trying to figure out the best way to help influence product, place or price as part of an organization's marketing mix, here are potential areas of focus for these "other" Ps:

Product: marketing improves access

One of the greatest challenges facing hospitals and health systems today is access. The issues related to access are many — lack of primary care providers, limited brick and mortar entry points, clunky or non-existent virtual offerings, specialists who are six months out for the next appointment, long wait times for urgent care or ED visits. The list goes on and on. In addition, there's a growing realization that if you want utilization for specialty care, surgical care or tertiary care — those "mid-to-bottom of the funnel" services that provide the highest financial return — health systems must pull those patients in first at the top of the funnel, through virtual care, retail care, urgent care, emergency care, and other "immediate" access points. This has led to a rapid expansion in these services across the industry, as well as innovative ways to address access through new models such as freestanding EDs or micro-hospitals.

In a number of health systems, marketing leaders are being asked to tackle the access issue. There's a realization that to best understand access challenges and their overall impact on the organization, there must be a holistic understanding of the consumer or patient journey, and where access points play the most pivotal role. Marketers typically have the best vantage point from which to understand that journey, and to understand what, exactly, consumers desire at each point along the way.

Your "products" — in this case the health and clinical services you offer your communities — are only as strong as your customers' ability to access them. As a marketer, you have a critical role to play in helping your organization unlock access and dramatically impact your organization's business objectives.

Place: more consumers are "getting their care where they get their bread"

"Place" typically refers to the geographic locations or channels an organization uses to deliver its products or services. When considering employers as a marketing stakeholder, care may still be delivered in the same geographic (or virtual) locations as it is with individuals, but building direct relationships with employers represents a traditionally untapped channel for health systems. In the past few years, leading systems like Cleveland Clinic have built relationships with companies such as Lowe's to offer customized, exclusive care delivery that is seen as a benefit to both parties. As health systems continue to explore provider-sponsored health plans, employers will take on a significant role as the primary healthcare purchaser. In some cases, health systems are expanding their direct-with-employer relationships, cutting insurance plans out of the equation altogether.

Healthcare marketers can use their expertise and data-informed approach to leverage the power of the organization's brand and understand the needs of employers. Leading systems are dedicating marketing and sales roles to B2B customers, with some focusing marketers on employers alone. As the industry continues to morph and relationships within the sector continue to shift, marketers will have an increasingly important role in shaping how employers are yet another key "place" where services and value are delivered.

Price: how brand drives price

Often, brand power goes hand-in-hand with pricing power. Examples of this include Apple, Tesla, or Perrier — who can command a higher price than similar products due to the strong preference and loyalty consumers have for these brands.

While pricing in healthcare is certainly more complex than other industries, the pricing power of brands is still in play in our world. When consumers perceive a health system brand to be demonstrably superior to other choices they may have, they will travel further distances, deal with more difficult experiences, and otherwise incur a higher "price" to receive care at that system.

While the price and cost of care at destination healthcare brands such as Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic or Johns Hopkins may be higher than other health systems, the price differential does not show up to the consumer in the same way it does for Apple, Tesla or Perrier. That's primarily because the price of healthcare is only borne by consumers in a limited way, driven in most cases by the patient's insurance coverage. Even then, who pays the price of care is convoluted by insurance variables such as deductibles, co-pays, and co-insurance.

So where does pricing power play a role here? It impacts the negotiations health systems have with insurance plans. While payors may never admit it, there is often brand impact on payor/provider negotiations. The stronger the health system brand, the more valued and "unreplaceable" it is by employers and consumers, and the stronger negotiating power it has.

The trick, of course, is determining the value of that pricing power, and while we have yet to see anyone do this in a quantitative way, it may start by just understanding the value of a health system's brand to start with — the financial value of brand, whether through market capitalization, stock value, M&A "goodwill" or an independent, annual brand value measurement.

No matter how you go about it, consider how you can help your organization determine the financial value of your brand. Knowing this key financial strength can be the first step in understanding the impact of your brand on payor negotiations, and, ultimately, on the "price" you're able to set because of them.

Chris Bevolo is Executive Vice President at ReviveHealth. ○



Chris Bevolo



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Communication's role in addressing mental illness

Six ways public relations can be crucial in reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness.

By Srikant Ramaswami

All too often, people with mental illness are made to feel different. They are ridiculed, bullied, even ignored. Indeed, there's a stigma attached to people struggling with mental illness who may often feel ashamed of something that's out of their control. Worst of all, this stigma often prevents people from seeking the help they need.

The role of communicators can be pivotal in addressing the stigma associated with mental illness. Below are six ways in which we, as communications professionals, can make a change.

Careful use of language. When writing about mental health issues, pitching media, launching disease awareness campaigns or furthering patient advocacy, it's important to choose the right words and images that illustrate what it's like to live with a mental illness. The way people with mental illnesses are addressed goes a long way toward removing labels that are often put on them. They are not "crazy" or "schizophrenic" or "possessed." Rather, they are very much like you and me, with many of the same aspirations and dreams.

Supporting mental health education in schools. As state governments incorporate mental health education into school curriculum, communicators can piggy-back off these efforts by working with their clients to support CSR campaigns that raise awareness around mental health issues. On July 1, a new law took effect in New York,

adding a paragraph to the state's Education Law mandating mental health as part of health education in schools. Decreasing stigma, changing attitudes and giving students practical knowledge they can use when it comes to mental health problems they or others face is precisely why New York passed this legislation. Communicators can highlight the New York example and partner with companies to highlight this important work.

Investing in mental wellness in the workplace. Corporations could benefit greatly by talking more about mental health and offering ways for employees to meditate, do yoga, or help them to absorb and manage stress. The way corporate communications departments work with senior leaders to integrate these activities with employees is important and can have great benefits on a healthy workforce that's mentally and physically energized to do their best work. Corporate communicators can help craft strong messages that convey the importance of physical and mental wellness for holistic well-being.

Changing public policy through public messaging. According to a recent article in *Psychiatric News*, public messaging can be effective at changing behavior, decreasing stigma and increasing public support for access to and treatment for mental illness and substance use disorders. The article quotes Emma McGinty, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the Department of Health

Policy and Management at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, who said that "with some notable exceptions, it's an area that has not gotten a lot of attention."

In a paper posted online October 2, 2017, in *Psychiatric Services*, *Psychiatry News* reported that McGinty and her colleagues assessed what's currently known about how communication strategies influence public support for mental illness and substance use disorder policies. In addition to calling for more research about what works and what doesn't, the panel of 45 experts formulated recommendations around five communication strategies, with an emphasis on two that are particularly effective: personal narratives describing struggles with mental illness or substance use disorders and illustrations of the barriers people face in getting treatment.

The primary hypothesis put forward was that people are more likely to read or listen to a story that tells a personal narrative than one that's heavy on facts.

Mental illness is real, and we must keep talking about it. More and more, celebrities are coming forward to highlight their personal struggles with anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and other mental illnesses. In certain parts of the world, movies are also tackling these taboo subjects and bringing the conversation to the mainstream. Communicators can underscore these celebrity testimonials to let individuals, families and caregivers know they're not alone, and that mental illness affects everyone.

Cultural communication is essential. When communicators work to destigmatize mental illness, they must consider cultural sensitivities that play a big role in suppressing conversations around this topic. In China, for example, where mental illness isn't openly discussed, I led an internal PR campaign encouraging leaders to speak out about loved ones who were struggling with mental illness. This went viral and many employees who didn't want to speak about it mustered the courage to tell their stories in light of the example that was set by leadership.

Srikant Ramaswami is EVP, Global and Emerging Markets, Healthcare, rbb Communications. ○



Srikant Ramaswami

Third-party data dips out of favor

Marketers may reduce their reliance on third-party data in the coming years, according to the latest edition of an annual survey conducted by the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University.

According to Duke's survey, less than a third of CMOs polled — 29.7 percent — said they plan to utilize more third-party data in the next two years, or information collected by providers and sold to marketers for the purpose of helping them target their campaigns. Only 31 percent said they've increased the amount of third-party data they've used over the last two years.

About six in 10 respondents — 59.4 percent — said they haven't changed the amount of third-party data they've used over the last two years, and about the same number — 58.9 percent — said they'll rely on the same amount of third-party data

they use over the next two years. More than 10 percent — 11.4 percent — said they anticipate using less third-party data over the next two years, and 9.4 percent said they've already decreased their third-party data usage.

While marketers might be pulling back on third-party data, most respondents admitted they weren't worried that their company's use of that data would raise consumer privacy concerns (only 10.7 percent described themselves as "very worried" about this). On the other hand, marketers' use of online data is expected to rise, as 70 percent of respondents said they planned to use more online data in the next two years.

Duke University's CMO Survey polled more than 300 U.S.-based chief marketing officers in July and August. The survey was commissioned by the American Marketing Association and Deloitte. ○

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Nurturing communications' creative culture

Creativity should be at a PR agency's core, not simply a task undertaken by a single department.

By Jon Watson

Perhaps unsurprisingly, clients are demanding greater levels of creativity from their PR agency every year. This goes hand-in-hand with a steady increase in clients' "receptiveness" to creative ideas to solve their problems.

There is both a demand and an appetite for "creative."

In response to this, there's been a corresponding investment in creative talent in our industry. Many leading PR firms now have a creative director and have acquired advertising agencies to assimilate their creative departments into the integrated communications agency model.

Problem solved? Sadly not. The creative needle has hardly moved.

It raises two interesting questions: What is "creativity?" and whose job is it to spirit it up from nowhere?

To the question "What is creativity?" the glib answer is "It depends on who you ask." It's almost impossible to quantify (although an entire industry exists to try!). Whenever someone asks me this question, I reply, "generosity." Creativity should give you something; it should leave you richer in some way than before. It should provoke, reward, enrich, inform, inspire. And you should be ever so slightly altered having experienced it. It should create movement. Ideally, meaningful change.

And to the question, "whose job is it?" the solution doesn't stop at "the creative director."

Simply appointing someone as "creative" isn't enough to develop work that moves hearts and minds, that drives this mean-

ingful change. It's certainly a good start, but it requires a cultural shift from within — across the entire organization. For creativity (in both ideas and our people) to thrive, we need to nurture an environment that allows it to grow. An individual can't do it in isolation.

Some organizations haven't fully grasped this. Perhaps this is why the exodus frequency of these new creative champions almost matches the number of triumphant arrivals.

First and foremost, we must recognize that all humans are hardwired to create while organizations are not. We must celebrate being human in all its imperfect glory and encourage people to be their authentic selves. We need time to think, to make mistakes, to learn and develop, to improve and perfect. That's how creative works. There's risk attached.

This is alien to historically risk-averse businesses. Failure is bad. Bad for reputation. Bad for business. But as one of the world's most successful engineers, Soichiro Honda, rightly highlights, success is 99 percent failure. If you don't allow yourself to fail, you'll always end up doing the same old tried-and-trusted tactics. Nobody will fire you for it. They won't thank you (they won't remember you either). Many agencies rate their own work "ordinary" and rarely rate it "inspirational." Ouch.

That's the tough one to get your arms around. But Honda was so right.

Second, we should focus on the creative experience that our entire team has in working at the agency, as well as the

experience that our clients have in being our partners. Creative thinking should always be at the core of the business. All too often, it's just bolted on at the end. And it shows.

If every aspect of your business has a creative beginning, it will stand a far higher chance of having a creative end. How you interact with your clients, how you generate insight, how you convert this to a strategy, how you interact with the other members of the organization. Do that, and the creative is a seamless extension of your solution — not a retro-fitted interpretation. By being committed to the highest quality of creative thinking, making it easy to do business with us, and making good use of people's time, we make it worth it for everyone.

This process highlights a final point. If the work isn't relevant, it simply won't work. It has no generosity to give. This is why insight is such a critical component to unlocking creativity. We observe critical biases and hypotheses to uncover deeper, unspoken truths about our stakeholders, the commercial and cultural landscapes, and the scientific foundations of medications and health conditions. And we have a variety of stakeholders to consider — from the media, to patients, caregivers, advocates, HCPs, payers and policymakers — all have different perspectives and priorities.

True insight comes from curiosity and letting go of assumptions. There are countless tools and techniques. It takes rigor to go deep and relentless questioning to unearth a meaningful insight that can lead to a transformative strategy that promotes and inspires great creative.

At Health Unlimited, our purpose is to create meaningful change in health, and we're committed to solving the world's most complex and challenging health issues. We apply these creative principles to solve client problems as we help them advance landmark developments in health and deliver results.

With words like "complex" and "challenging," the creative has to be up to the task. It has to be meaningful and it has to reward a person's involvement. That rarely happens straight out of the box. But that's okay. And Soichiro Honda would agree with us.

Jon Watson is Global Executive Creative Director of Health Unlimited, a global health consultancy and communications agency. ○



Jon Watson

Younger adults reconsider Facebook

An increasing number of Facebook users in the U.S. have taken recent steps to put some distance between themselves and the social media giant, according to recent report released by Pew Research Center.

Pew's report found that about four-in-ten (42 percent) U.S. adults said they've taken a break from the platform for several weeks or more in the last 12 months.

More than a quarter (26 percent) reported that they've deleted Facebook's app from their cellphone.

Younger adults comprised the demographic most likely to have limited their relationship with the social media site recently. Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of Facebook users ages 18 to 29 said they've

adjusted their Facebook privacy settings in the last year, compared to only a third of Facebook users 65 and older. And nearly half of younger users (44 percent) said they've deleted the Facebook app from their phone in the past 12 months, compared with only 12 percent of users ages 65 and older have

Altogether, more than half of all Facebook users polled (54 percent) said they've adjusted their privacy settings in some way in the past year. Fewer than 10 percent also said they've downloaded the personal data Facebook has on them, which provoked 79 percent who had done so to adjust their privacy settings.

Pew's report polled 4,594 U.S. adults between May and June. ○

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Public relations strategies for public health

Why communications should be a driver, not an afterthought, for public health initiatives.

By Erynne Jones

In September, the *New York Times* posted an opinion piece on the merits of public health initiatives. The authors, economist Austin Frakt and pediatrician Aaron E. Carroll, make the case that public health campaigns deliver outsized return on investment in term of broadly improving health in the U.S. in areas such as smoking and diabetes.

Interestingly, a central point to the article states what I believe is a herald for public relations professionals. Under the subheading, “Public health needs better public relations,” the authors write: “Perhaps the biggest change needed is for public health to do a better job at trumpeting its success. Too often, it seems to be the unsung hero.”

Indeed, while public health agencies do a great job of creating solutions, they often fall short communicating their approaches and successes. This point deserves greater examination for public relations professionals.

“Public health” encompasses all the programs, policies, and practices needed to keep populations of people, and the communities in which they live, healthy — both in and outside of the clinical setting.

I’ve worked in various positions in public health for more than a decade, beginning on the policy and regulatory side of public health, and now in public relations. Like Mr. Frakt and Dr. Carroll, it is surprising to me how many innovative approaches and breakthrough results are achieved but go unrecognized.

Most of us are familiar with the major public health headlines: the opioid crisis and continuing confusion around what to do to resolve it; the devastating impact that water contamination continues to have on communities in Flint, Michigan; the recently announced record-high S.T.D. rate.

But the State Targeted Response to Opioid Crisis Grants? The impact of the U.S. Public Health Services Act State Loan Repayment Program funding on physician shortages? The myriad innovations being done via Section 1115 Demonstration Waivers? All these programs are achieving amazing results, yet their impact is not being touted to a broader audience in an easy-to-understand way.

Public health professionals should seek to be more familiar with how thoughtfully planning out a public relations strategy could enhance public health initiatives. Some public agencies might feel like they

shouldn’t use public money to promote their success, not realizing that publicity for a successful and innovative campaign doesn’t solely benefit their organization; it translates to additional outreach and education about the programs being implemented. Communicating approaches, lessons learned, and successes helps to expand the adoption of solutions.

Based on some first-hand observations and best practices, here are some thoughts on elevating public relations in public health:

Name and brand the campaign. Often, a public health strategy consists of multiple funding streams and a variety of projects. Determining the core concept, developing strong messaging, and tying all project activities back to a main purpose is critical to creating a program that from the outside, looks seamless.

Take the time to test the campaign. If on a budget, collect individual feedback. For example, we worked with a client to test a public health campaign with 50 professionals in public health, physicians, and patients prior to launch. We learned that our core messages were on track. However, we also learned that in ethnically diverse California, we needed materials that appealed to a variety of different languages and cultures, meaning catchy messaging needed to be reworked to have the right impact when translated.

Create materials that are written for public health stakeholders, but also inform the general public. Fact sheets, social media messages, blog entries, and newsletter content speak plainly and clearly to multiple audiences. In the digital age, readers and viewers respond to images in addition to words — well-designed charts and infographics can convey messages as well as, and sometimes better than, written narratives. Conducting audience research prior to rolling out a public health campaign will help identify targeted channels for effective outreach, taking into account audience demographics, regional variations, and cultural considerations.

Encourage buy-in early from partners and key opinion leaders. Develop a strategy for working with both partner organizations (large groups such as trade associations that represent and speak on behalf of a collective group of stakeholders) and with key opinion leaders (well-respected individuals in the

field with outsized influence on large populations). For example, partner organizations representing healthcare professionals in rural areas will generally speak to memberships with more formalized messages. Key opinion leaders can deliver similar messages but in a more conversational tone.

Work with public relations professionals. This seems like an obvious point. However, many public health agencies take a “go-it-alone” approach in developing a public health initiative, often viewing a partnership with an outside entity as something reserved for the commercial space. In doing so, they miss out on the benefit of working with a public relations professional or agency that has multifaceted experiences and practices in areas like messaging, media relations, social media, speech and presentation writing, and multimedia production. Partnership with a public relations firm can free up staff resources to focus on other essential components of the program while ensuring that the public health initiative is appropriately messaged and thoughtfully executed.

Positive publicity and strategic communications can result in opening doors for future funding for public health initiatives, showcasing the work public health professionals have done, and potentially expanding the reach of their programs to the communities that need it most. So, let’s roll up our sleeves, extend a hand, and make sure these great stories don’t go untold.

Erynne Jones, MPH, handles public relations duties for KP Public Affairs in Sacramento, CA. ○



Erynne Jones

PR news brief

Tourism Concern shutters

Tourism Concern, the advocate for ethical tourism, has shut down after three decades of operation due to financial pressures.

Formed to promote tourism that is ethical, fair and a positive experience for both travelers and the people and places they visit, TC cited funding cutbacks from charitable groups and a fall-off in income from membership as the reasons for its closure.

Rather than continue as a “zombie charity” and raising money simply to exist, TC’s trustees voted to close, according to the group’s Sept. 26 statement.

Launched in London in 1988, TC tackled issues such as human rights, worker exploitation, “slum tourism,” sustainability, environmental matters and the “impact of Airbnb in European ‘honeypot cities,’” reported the *Guardian*.



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Returning trust to the local health experience

Although trust in the healthcare industry appears untroubled globally, Edelman's 2018 Trust Barometer has discovered a troubling flux at local levels.

By Susan Isenberg

Seemingly calm on the surface from a global perspective, trust in healthcare and its sub-sectors tells quite a different story when a deeper dive is made into local market data, according to Edelman's 2018 Trust Barometer. Now in its 18th year, the firm's annual trust and credibility survey found major fluctuations across the 28 markets we study.

Globally, trust in healthcare lost only two points from the previous year, remaining well within the trusted range, with a score of 63. On a local level, however, trust in healthcare declined in 17 of the 28 markets. And, healthcare was the least trusted industry sector of 15 studied in the Trust Barometer in key markets such as the U.S., Brazil and Japan, among others.

Drilling down even further, trust in the five sub-sectors of healthcare Edelman studies — Pharmaceuticals, Biotech/Life Sciences, Consumer Health, Hospital/Providers and Insurance — made minimal progress globally, if any, compared to the previous year. Pharma and Consumer Health maintained neutral scores of 55 and 56, respectively, from the previous year; Biotech / Life Sciences dropped one point to a score of 62, although remained trusted; Insurance gained one point to 58; and Hospitals / Clinics gained three points, moving to a score of 72.

However, when viewed market by market, trust scores varied much more dramatically. For example, trust in Pharma plummeted in the United States, dropping 13 points from the previous year to 38, its lowest score ever in the Trust Barometer. This sub-sector saw declines across 13 markets in total, as well as the largest gap between the most trusting country (Indonesia, with a score of 85) and the least (Germany, with a score of 30). Another alarm for pharmaceutical companies: the least-trusting countries, Germany, France and the U.S., also saw the biggest drops in trust this year, a red flag given their market size and that these are home countries for the headquarters of several global pharmaceutical companies.

What's causing these local swings in trust? Around the world, healthcare companies — and pharmaceutical companies particularly — have been thrown into a war of words about who's to blame for the high cost of healthcare. While the blame game may seem to be the most heated in the U.S., it's spreading on a worldwide scale. Edelman believes that rather than clearing

any one healthcare group from perceived wrongdoing, this ongoing public argument has had the unintended consequence of lowering trust across the entire healthcare industry. No sub-sector of healthcare is coming out ahead, and instead it has served to amplify that health costs are rising with no solution yet in sight.

To regain footing from this year's global and local drops in trust, the health industry must pivot from the blame game around cost and show how they're part of the solution. The Trust Barometer also shows companies must address the demands of an increasingly global yet polarized world.

There are a number of ways to build trust:

Be the lab, not the sales force. Edelman's Trust data show that while people tend to trust the sub-sectors of healthcare they associate with promising innovation, like Biotech, goodwill may evaporate at the prescription counter. Health companies must double down on messaging around their benefits to society or run the risk of promising advances being overpowered by the pricing outrage cycle. This includes focusing messages around R&D, innovation and hard science, versus profits, sales and marketing.

Sell more than the product. Patients are looking to health companies to build and create solutions beyond the pill. Edelman data also show the general population has generally positive sentiment toward the future of health technology and its implications for health and healthcare. While developing new treatments is expected of the industry, providing holistic solutions will further build trust. Health companies must show how they are treating the whole person.

Humanize the approach. Healthcare companies should look to those trusted within the industry — like hospitals and clinics — and determine how they could establish a more personal connection with patients. For example, humanizing what happens in the laboratory by showcasing the real scientists behind a breakthrough, or creating a campaign where patients are heard and can contribute rather than just feeling they're simply the target of promotions for a new drug.

Localization leads. Despite the global footprint of many companies across the industry, healthcare is always a local experience; availability of care, treatments, insurance and more varies considerably by

market. Communications marketing activities must be tailored locally, by country and by audience, meeting local standards and local expectations. One size doesn't fit all in global communications.

To regain trust, healthcare companies must address both unmet patient needs and the costs of care, as well as provide solutions beyond products to improve patient outcomes. Healthcare companies have ample room to share how they're doing this through their own content and platforms; this year we have global data that shows the content provided by health companies is viewed as credible, while only 53 percent trust health news reported by the media. This is a clear opportunity for health companies to use their own media channels and share their stories through interactive, creative content.

Susan Isenberg is Edelman Global Health Sector Chair. ○



Susan Isenberg

PR news brief

Adobe Acquires Marketo

Software developer Adobe has acquired marketing automation software company Marketo.

The transaction, which is expected to close during 2018's fourth quarter, comes with a reported \$4.75 billion price tag, and is reportedly the largest acquisition in the San Jose-based software giant's history.

Marketo CEO Steve Lucas will join Adobe's senior leadership team and will report to Adobe executive VP Brad Rencher.

San Mateo, CA-based Marketo was founded in 2006. The cloud-based B2B marketing platform, which staffs more than 1,000 employees across a dozen offices, was acquired by billionaire Robert Smith's private equity firm, Vista Equity Partners, two years ago for \$1.8 billion.

The acquisition, which wins Adobe all of Marketo's 5,000 customers, bolsters the software developer's B2B marketing services toolkit, now effectively positioning the company in direct competition with customer relationship management platform Salesforce.

In a conference call, Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen said he believes "the combination of Adobe Experience Cloud's analytics, personalization and content solutions with Marketo's lead management, account-based marketing and attribution technology will make us the leading platform for all marketers."

The Marketo deal, which remains subject to regulatory approval as well as customary closing conditions, arrives on the heels of Adobe's \$1.7 billion June acquisition of e-commerce platform Magento.

Adobe staffs more than 15,000 employees worldwide.

Uber hires Coke vet Messina as first CMO

Uber has hired Coca-Cola veteran Rebecca Messina as its first Global Chief Marketing Officer.

Messina joins Uber from Beam Suntory, where she was Senior VP and Global Chief Marketing officer.

Before that, she spent 22 years at the Coca-Cola Company, most recently as Senior VP Marketing & Innovation, Ventures & Emerging Brands.

Messina will work with Uber's international marketing teams on branding and marketing strategies, as well as helping to repair the company's reputation, which took a major hit amidst accusations of a toxic work culture and the subsequent resignation of co-founder Travis Kalanick.

Messina's hiring follows last month's announcement that former Warranty Group CEO & Merrill Lynch alum Nelson Chai would become Chief Financial Officer of the company.

Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi said that the company was on track to launch an IPO next year and had no plans to sell its self-driving car research division. ○



Rebecca Messina

Hynes exits Text100 as it Merges with Bite

Aedhmar Hynes is leaving the CEO job of Text100 after an 18-year run, as UK-based Next 15 Communications parent company merges the shop with Bite Communications.

Her departure follows last year's exit of IBM and Lenovo from Text100's client roster.

In a Sept. 20 blog, Hynes wrote that she leaves "with mixed emotions," but feels that

it's the right time to depart as Bite CEO Helena Maus assumes leadership of the combined entity, which will have a new name.

As CEO, Hynes understood that her role was to do her best to advance the Text100 team and vision until it was time for someone else to take over, according to her blog.

The 52-year-old executive, who joined Text100 28 years ago, plans to focus her time and energy on her role as chair of the Arthur Page Society. ○



Aedhmar Hynes

FP picks Madden to lead sustainability unit

Jane Madden, a former Burson-Marsteller executive who led that WPP unit's U.S. corporate responsibility offering, has joined Finn Partners, where she's been picked to head the agency's sustainability and social impact practice.

Madden joins the independent agency from Burson-Marsteller, where she served as Managing Director, Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability out of the agency's Chicago office. She was previously a Partner at Environmental Resources Management, where she led that environmental services company's sustainability practice. Prior to that she was a Social Responsibility/Sustainability Executive VP at Edelman, where she launched its Chicago CSR & sustainability practice.

Madden will work across FP's offices in the U.S., Europe and Asia to build its sustainability and social impact practice globally. She'll be stationed in Chicago. ○



Jane Madden

Under Armour names new CMO

Tommy Hilfiger alum Alessandro de Pestel has moved to Under Armour, where he's been named Chief Marketing Officer of the athletic apparel and footwear company.

de Pestel fills a slot that's been vacant at the Baltimore-based sportswear brand since last November, after former CMO Andrew Donkin left the company abruptly after a 15-month stint as part of a larger executive shakeup that followed the company's dismal 2017 financial performance.

de Pestel joins Under Armour from fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger, where he was stationed for more than a decade and most recently served as Executive Vice President of Marketing, Communications and Consumer Insights in the company's European headquarters in Amsterdam.

He was previously EMEA Region Marketing EVP for Calvin Klein in Amsterdam, and prior to that, served as International



Alessandro de Pestel

Communications director for Christian Dior Parfums in France and global marketing VP for Omega Watches in Switzerland.

de Pestel will now lead all aspects of Under Armour's global marketing efforts and will be based in the company's Baltimore headquarters. ○

H+K hires Hong Kong head

Hill+Knowlton Strategies has appointed Nan Dong to the roles of Managing Director, Hong Kong, and Financial Communications Practice Director.

Dong was most recently Managing Director at FTI Consulting Hong Kong. Before that, she served as Executive Director in Golin's Hong Kong office. Her experience encompasses capital market communications, corporate communications and reputation and crisis management, working with clients in banking, property, TMT, pharmaceutical, online gaming, energy and resources, aviation and logistics.

H+K Asia Pacific Chairman Vivian Lines said that Dong's "deep knowledge, paired with her proven ability to drive growth, will help us achieve our ambitions for the business in Hong Kong." ○



Nan Dong

Benecke guides growth at RF

Rowan Benecke, who exited Burson Cohn & Wolfe last month, is now Chief Growth Officer at Ruder Finn.

Benecke had been Chief Technology Officer at Burson-Marsteller, a post that he held since 2014 after exiting leadership positions at Text100 and WE Communications.

At RF, he will lead global growth strategies, including business development, acquisitions, partnerships and developing client relationships, according to the shop's statement.

RF also hired Constantine Frangos, who has more than 20 years of experience, as Creative Director, a new spot.

He will develop multi-channel programs, content and help integrate the shop's offerings into a single platform. ○



Rowan Benecke

Communications 'must haves' during an acquisition

Insights and recommendations on how to find a new, shared voice during an acquisition.

By Cathy Wolfe

At some point in your communications career, you may experience the challenges and opportunities that arise from an acquisition or merger. With 2017 setting a record for the most mergers and acquisitions in a calendar year, according to Thomson Reuters, and 30 hospital and health system mergers and acquisitions occurring in the first quarter of 2018 alone, it's evident that frequent consolidation is redefining the business landscape.

Given my experience with Canon Inc.'s acquisition of Toshiba Medical, I'd like to share the communications and marketing lessons I learned through this process as two iconic brands became one. It was fascinating to see an iconic company such as Canon — known for pioneering imaging technology — acquire an established diagnostic imaging brand that came with not only name recognition, but strong customer loyalty as well.

The acquisition was completed in 2016, followed by the formal name change to Canon Medical Systems in 2018. Our challenge throughout this time was developing a strategic and effective communications plan that resonated with employees, partners, existing and potential customers, and was centered around common understanding and trust.

While the opportunity to spearhead a communications and marketing strategy for an acquisition like this may seem daunting, in the end my team and I were able to add valuable tools and experiences to our skill sets. There are four key takeaways from the process that enabled us to successfully integrate the stories and cultures of both companies to find a new brand voice.

Look for common ground

We began the story-mining process by going back to the origin stories of each brand. Although Canon was not as big a player in medical devices as Toshiba Medical, we learned that its first President — Takeshi Mitarai — was a doctor. And, in 1940 Canon introduced Japan's first indirect X-ray camera which was used for the early detection of pulmonary tuberculosis. These findings, among others, unearthed stories and a new narrative around Canon's longstanding passion for healthcare.

From there, we tapped both companies' origin stories — each rooted in health care — to fuel Canon Medical Systems' new brand identity and vision for delivering

world-class health care solutions. Our integrated communications strategy elevated our shared values through employee, stakeholder and market communications to introduce our new voice.

Bring the brand philosophies together

Next, we focused our efforts on the corporate philosophies and values of each company, in an effort to better understand how our cultures could potentially fuse. Toshiba Medical Systems built a legacy centered on its "Made for Life" philosophy, a longstanding commitment to our "partners, patients, and you" focus which calls for understanding that relationships rely on trust, respect, and transparency.

Canon's heritage stems from its kyosei philosophy which conveys its dedication to seeing "all people, regardless of race, religion or culture, harmoniously living and working together in happiness." These two points of view, both rooted in innovation and customer-centric solutions, are naturally complimentary, relatable and connected.

The innate synergies between our brand philosophies created natural synergies not only for our storytelling and communication/marketing initiatives, but for our teams as well.

Don't go it alone

The third takeaway is to ensure that both internal and external audiences are engaged throughout the process, right alongside you. From customers and partners to every employee, we communicated frequently and made sure that the process was transparent. As a result, we achieved 84 percent awareness of the acquisition in the U.S. among physicians and imaging directors within months of announcing the name change.

Acquisitions inevitably breed uncertainty and during this crucial time we found that proactively communicating to all of our key stakeholders ensured that any seeds of doubt never took root. By engaging with employees, customers and partners, we found and leveraged new optimism and excitement for the future, as the newly minted Canon Medical brand emerged.

In fact, immediately after the acquisition, employees ranked the brand a stable partner (4.4) and technology leader (4.3) (out of 5.0 scale).

Content is key


The final piece of our communications

strategy was tapping into visual storytelling during the transition. This enabled us to fully capture the excitement and to highlight the benefits of the two brands coming together as one.

The tactics we used to accomplish this were advertising, paid search, proactive media relations and storytelling, social tiles and web and video content, all of which was focused on humanizing the story and bringing the new brand to life. And whether it was earned, shared or owned content, we made sure that the messaging was consistent and that it spoke to our key audiences.

As I look back, I can see that the keys to our success were not only finding common ground and synergies between the two brands, but being transparent by communicating frequently and proactively with all of our key stakeholders.

It was a great experience for my team and me, and a great way to remind ourselves that we can always learn and grow, which in the end better prepares us for communications opportunities in the future.

Cathy Wolfe is Senior Director of Strategic Communication and Market Intelligence at Canon Medical Systems USA, Inc. 



Cathy Wolfe

PR news brief

Huntsworth acquires Navience for \$24 million

Huntsworth is acquiring an 80 percent stake in Navience Healthcare Solutions for \$24 million, and will fold the market access/payer shop into its Evoke healthcare communications offering.

Princeton-based Navience recorded revenues of \$6.4 million in 2017 and profits of \$3.8 million.

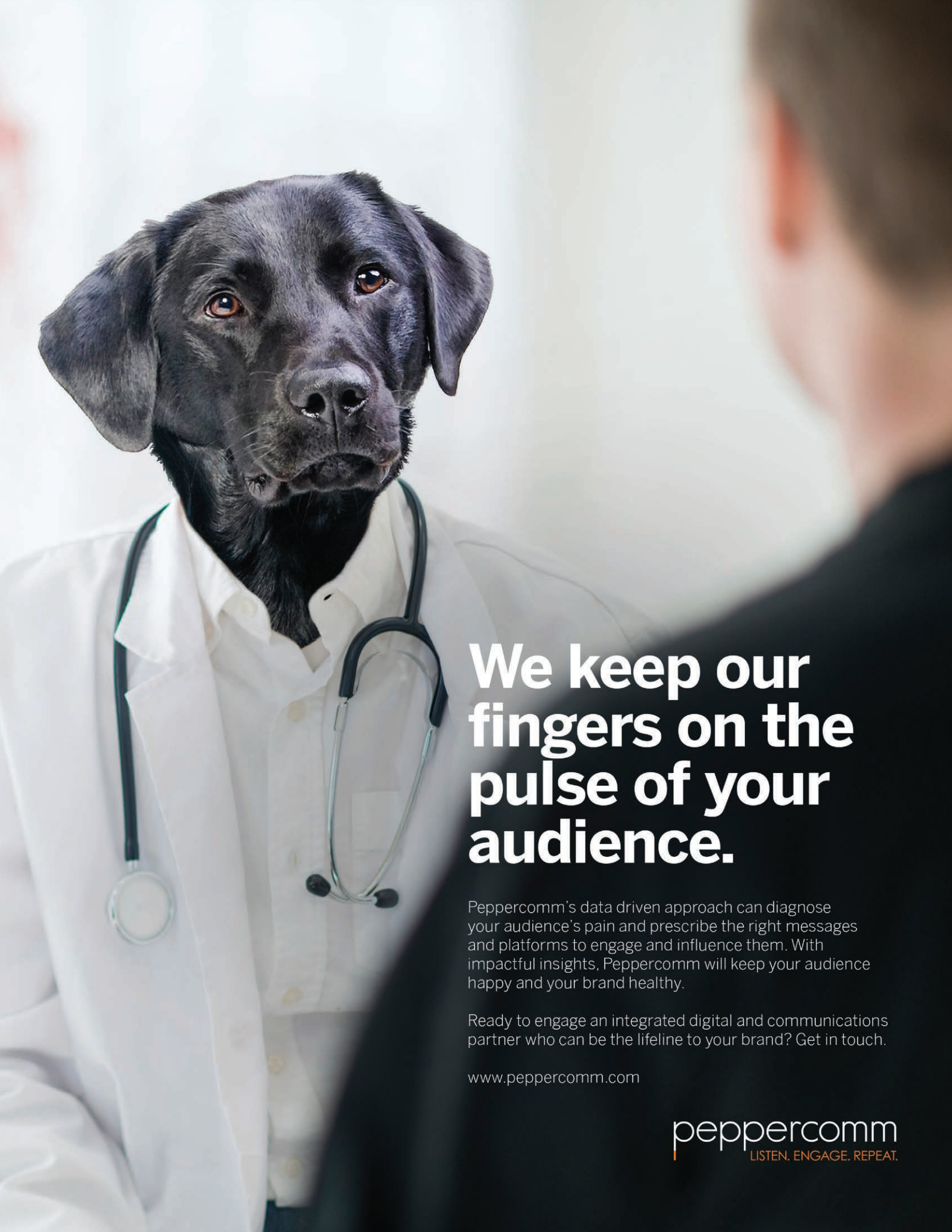
"The influence of the payer, in the medical decision-making process and to the success or failure of any given product in today's healthcare landscape, cannot be overstated," said Reid Connolly, Evoke CEO, in announcing the deal.

Navience founder John Shamsey will helm the rebranded Evoke Navience. He'll report to Connolly, who called the acquisition "an ideal fit."

Huntsworth's \$24 million outlay for the 80 percent stake is subject to adjustment for working capital and deferred compensation requirements based on earnings for the two-year period ended Dec. 31, 2019. The total consideration is capped at \$40 million.

The UK firm may acquire the remaining 20 percent of Navience subject to put and call rights that are exercisable beginning in 2022. The acquisition price for full-ownership of Navience is capped at \$94 million.

Evoke has more than 550 staffers in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and London.



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Healthcare, today and tomorrow

A reflection on this year's healthcare media landscape, and some thoughts on where it's going in 2019.

By Sally Bain

As we enter the final quarter of 2018, we've observed and experienced some significant trends emerging in our healthcare practice.

Notably, we've collaborated with a steady influx of healthcare companies headquartered in Asia who are staking a claim for their brands in the U.S. market. We're also getting back to basics: our team has had an increased refocus on traditional earned media asks from both existing clients and prospects. Finally, the second coming of the digital health revolution is here. Companies are innovating in regards to how they're engaging with stakeholders and influencers that matter.

East meets west in the west

The interest and expansion of healthcare companies based in APAC or funded by APAC investors to launch their brands in the U.S. has grown significantly. We've had the exciting opportunity to work with a number of these companies and to support the introductions of their unique and innovative services, including investigative therapeutics. Their approach to communications and engagement has been a welcomed transformation as we continue to expand and refine our global capabilities.

More specifically, a global healthcare company with headquarters in Singapore who's cultivated a number of spinoff brands playing in the hottest healthcare trends including digital health, drug delivery, AI and patient engagement, recently came to us with one request: help us establish these companies with a targeted and strategic approach. The team recently launched a technology that can support a fully remote clinical trial through smart-phone technology. The back-end analytics that's produced through the company's technology platform is the first-of-its-kind and there's no doubt

that we believe that the benefits of a remote digital trial will positively impact how drugs are brought to market.

Our team also engaged with a clinical-stage pharmaceutical company with investments from a large Korean pharmaceutical organization that truly has a unique approach to its clinical pipeline. With treatments currently being investigated to treat neuropathic pain and Alzheimer's, in true East meets West fashion, the therapy combines chemical compounds with botanicals from China and Korea. The offering will be a category disruptor for its mechanism of action.

Traditional media is evolving

We're a work in progress. We've continued to fine-tune our integrated offering but earned media has and will continue to live at our core. In this new real-time media environment, where the rules of engagement are changing daily, we are taking the necessary steps to ensure we are in lock step with our clients and their communications objectives.

Whether you define yourself as on the left or the right, red or blue, a supporter or resister of the current administration, we as an industry can't ignore the impact it's had on our day-to-day work. It's affected our planning, approach, how we counsel our clients and ultimately, the results.

So, what does this look like in real terms? We're dedicating more time to the development of storytelling and narratives that support our client's mission but also follow trends that allow us to insert points of view on to the national stage. We've created our own version of a war room except we're not in crisis mode, we're in creative mode. In this mindset, we're analyzing the current healthcare media landscape and how we approach inundated reporters and influencers

engaged throughout the request process. Building your healthcare advocate community starts by setting goals for your community and continues with an effort to understand your customers and making it a true team effort.

Never lose sight of experience

Content marketing is the most affordable solution for healthcare brands: the only thing you are paying for is your time investment. It's also what fuels your paid, shared and earned strategies, so it's a key part to any integrated solution. Healthcare purchasing decisions are quite personal; therefore, create and share content that nurtures influen-

with our messaging.

The digital health revolution continues

We believe that every company is a technology company. Over the past 12 months, we've experienced an upsurge of interest in the digital health arena. We've continued to successfully serve clients that are driven by technology at their core offering. Whether it's optimizing clinical research to enable discoveries through the creation of real-world evidence or providing amplification for a social platform for doctors to collaborate, we're helping to differentiate their value proposition to targeted decision makers.

With so many healthcare and healthcare technology trade publications dedicated to covering the evolution of digital health, we recognized — quickly — as a team that it's essential for us to follow, read, like, retweet and engage with influencers to effectively stay on top of the news and guidance in a regulated environment. Most recently, a statement from FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb detailed the new steps they are taking to spur innovation in digital health — a recognized and welcomed big step for a regulated entity. Gottlieb detailed their approach as a government agency to assist companies not accustomed to operating in a regulatory environment.

As we anticipate a bright and productive 2019, growth and a streamlined and focused approach will continue for us. Building stories to support our clients is second nature to our team. We thrive on digging into the details and creating opportunities to define our clients' unique and innovative solutions to the market.

Storytelling gets us out of bed every day. Let us do it for you.

Sally Bain is Senior Vice President, Earned Media at Racepoint Global. ○



Sally Bain

THE CONNECTED CONSUMER

Continued from page 16

Fortunately, healthcare is a very "experienced" space; we all deal with healthcare on some level, be it for ourselves or a loved one. A positive experience goes a long way. After intent and purchase, the key is nurturing these experiences to the point of loyalty, referral and advocacy. Creating a content marketing program grounded in brand advocacy — one that motivates the happiest of customers to promote your company — starts with a simple strategy and a commitment to keeping customers

tial experiences across different audiences. Whether that experience is anchored in data, patient stories, trend commentary or an example of how your solution or service helped a customer to improve a patient outcome, brands have a real opportunity to leverage the 1-2-3 punch of storytelling, brand advocacy and emotional marketing to demonstrate their company's personality and distinguish its voice.

Dan Martin is Senior Vice President at PAN Communications. Matthew Briggs is Vice President at PAN Communications. Together, Martin and Briggs co-lead the agency's healthcare practice. ○

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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.

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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.



O'Dwyer's guide to HEALTHCARE COMMUNICATIONS

ALLIDURA

A Syneos Health Company

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Quyen Yuen and Jessica Birardi,
Co-Leads, Allidura

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

Expertise: Allidura takes an integrated approach to communications with capabilities spanning public relations, digital and social media, marketing and branding, graphic design and multimedia, and research and analytics. Our meaningful insights and creative know-how have been tapped by a full range of consumer product and nutritional supplement brands, over-the-counter and beauty products, and food and beverage companies.

Allidura Consumer is part of Syneos Health Communications, the only healthcare communications network on the frontlines of healthcare. Our advertising, public relations, medical communications, digital, data science, research and market access specialists have the ability to tap the expertise of clinical and commercial colleagues worldwide to infuse programs with deep therapeutic and analytic insights. We work in scalable, collaborative teams that partner across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies that accelerate brand performance.

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 a purpose-driven strategic communication firm. We help organizations clarify and align their visions, values and strategies to bold actions that build trust and drive growth — inside and out. We are committed to using the power of communication to build better businesses.

Beehive works nationally on behalf of leading brands in industries ranging from healthcare and education to retail and financial services. We partner with clients to lead with courage in workplace culture, employee engagement, change management communication, crisis management, purpose, brand positioning and public relations.

The agency represents healthcare brands such as 3M Healthcare, 3M Oral Care, Beaumont Health, Coloplast, Government Employees Health Association (GEHA), University of Minnesota Health and University of Minnesota Physicians. Our senior team has deep experience working inside health systems, academic medical centers, physician practice groups, health plans, medical device and associations.

BIOSECTOR 2

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Shauna Keough, Managing Director
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Who we are: 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.

Expertise: 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 Syneos Health Communications, the only healthcare communications network that is part of a company on the frontlines of healthcare. Our advertising, public relations, medical communications, digital, data science, research and market access specialists have the ability to tap the expertise of clinical and commercial colleagues worldwide to infuse programs with deep therapeutic and analytic insights. We work in scalable, collaborative teams that partner across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies that accelerate brand performance.

BLISS INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION

Member of The Worldcom Public Relations Group

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Michael Roth, Partner & Healthcare Practice Leader
Vicky Aguiar, Senior Vice President
Alexis Odesser, Senior Vice President
Liz DeForest, 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, health insurance, life sciences, medical and platform technology companies to industry consortia, patient advocates, health educators, third party administrators, and consumer health organizations. Bliss offers end-to-end communications and marketing solutions that help our clients connect with stakeholders and influencers in the healthcare supply chain, and deliver compelling stories about the science, strategy or technology behind their

company or product.

Bliss understands 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 gain alignment on their aspirations, identify solutions that 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. What sets Bliss apart from other agencies and consultancies? They are both horizontally and vertically integrated and excel at creating the best thought leadership campaigns, with deep understanding of highly regulated subject matter like Medicare, Medicaid, drug and device recalls and warning letters, clinical trial monitoring and information sharing. Bliss's creative, proprietary approaches to strategic communications allows them to problem solve for our clients, while discovering unique and untapped opportunities. Capabilities include: Drug, diagnostic and medical device launches, corporate communications and C-suite thought leadership, brand and visual identity, clinical trial recruitment/support, content marketing, crisis and issues management, internal communications, data publication support, digital/social media strategy, disease awareness campaigns, measurement/CRM support, media relations and publicity, medical meeting support, online community management (including social), 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.

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

CERRELL ASSOCIATES

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Hal Dash, CEO, Principal
Steve Bullock, CFO, Principal

In an ever-changing sociopolitical climate impacting all sectors of the healthcare industry, Cerrell Associates has delivered award-winning communications results for some of the nation's largest healthcare providers, as well as clients in pharma and biotech. As a one-stop shop, our clients have access to a diverse team of strategists with experience navigating the complexities of the industry.

Whether it's policy advocacy, community relations or thought leadership, Cerrell has designed and deployed strategies that have a lasting impact. And our healthcare experts know industry trends and developments to ensure we are tell-



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

ing the stories that matter.

At Cerrell, there is no "one size fits all" approach. We work with our clients to develop local, regional or national programs with the ultimate goal of improving the health of our communities.

CHAMBERLAIN HEALTHCARE PR

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Christie Anbar, Managing Director
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Who we are: Chamberlain Health PR (CHPR), celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2018, is a diverse group of smart, creative and forward-thinking professionals who deliver powerful communications solutions for clients committed to improving health and well-being.

Expertise: CHPR simplifies the complex in order to change behaviors and mindset. Through this process we transform information into insights that allow clients to seize opportunities and overcome challenges. At CHPR we build strategies that work to inspire action and engagement in key audiences and use creativity to help break through clutter and resonate with key audiences. Ultimately, we deliver results that meet and exceed client objectives and expectations.

CHPR is part of Syneos Health Communications, the only healthcare communications network that is part of a company on the frontlines of healthcare. Our advertising, public relations, medical communications, digital, data science, research and market access spe-

cialists have the ability to tap the expertise of clinical and commercial colleagues worldwide to infuse programs with deep therapeutic and analytic insights. We work in scalable, collaborative teams that partner across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies that accelerate brand performance.

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Who we are: 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 large pharmaceutical companies focused on treatments for major disease areas to emerging specialty companies researching cures for rare diseases; from biotech to devices and diagnostics; as well as healthcare technology, hospitals, non-profits and academic centers.

Expertise: CCA sets the standard in delivering best-in-class communications in a collaborative, flexible environment where

creativity reigns and clients come first. For more than 20 years, we have achieved this by bringing the right people to the table – innovators, healthcare professionals, thought leaders, advocates, patients, and loved ones and then building alliances, communities, and champions motivated to act.

CCA is part of Syneos Health Communications, the only healthcare communications network on the frontlines of healthcare. Our advertising, public relations, medical communications, digital, data science, research, and market access specialists have the ability to tap the expertise of clinical and commercial colleagues worldwide to infuse programs with deep therapeutic and analytic insights. We work in scalable, collaborative teams that partner across disciplines and geographies to deliver integrated communications strategies that accelerate brand performance.

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C.L. Conroy, President
Jorge Martinez, Vice President

The Conroy Martinez Group is a bilingual, multicultural, full-service public relations and marketing firm delivering results to our clients in the areas of social and traditional media and marketing, media relations, and strategic counsel.

The Miami P.R. firm promotes US companies to the US Hispanic and Latin American markets and Latin American companies to the US marketplace.

The Conroy Martinez Group is an affiliate of The Public Relations Global Network, an organization of leading public relations agencies worldwide.

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

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CROSBY

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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.

Clients include Kaiser Permanente, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), American Kidney Fund, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Military OneSource, Qlarant, Sagepoint Senior Living, Saint Agnes Hospital, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, and Veterans Health Administration.

Crosby ranks among the top health communications agencies in the country and is a member of the PR Council and American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As). The firm has offices in Maryland's state capital of Annapolis and in Washington, D.C. To see case studies and capabilities, visit www.crosbymarketing.com.

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Thomas Graham, President & CEO
Karen Johnson, Vice President
Katie Carmichael, Vice President
Thomas Goff, Senior Advisor

CROSSWIND HEALTHCARE CAPABILITIES:

Crosswind Media and Public Relations helped Texas win the largest research contract in the state's history, has introduced one of the world's newest biotech brands to Texas and the world, and is helping other companies, startups,

care providers and public agencies bring some of the world's most complex biotechnologies to global markets. Some highlights:

Defense against bioterrorism: When the second-largest university system in Texas decided to form a team and go after a new Federal biodefense, pandemic response, and influenza center, it turned to Crosswind. The bid received feature coverage in top-tier global media. The Texas team was awarded that prestigious grant, making Texas, almost overnight, one of the nation's major hubs of vaccine production and bioterrorism preparedness.

A biotech boom: Crosswind was engaged to represent a *Fortune* Global 500 company from Japan that was entering the biopharmaceutical market by acquiring a Texas-based start-up aligned with this new federal bio-defense center. Global media covered the acquisition. Crosswind was then asked to take on communications work across the new owner's entire bio-pharmaceutical division.

Hacking medicine: When the world's top-ranked university decided to bring its biotech-centric "Hacking Medicine" workshop to the South by Southwest, the event leaders in Boston immediately contacted Crosswind in Austin. They needed a communications partner that understood a mission to use advanced digital strategies in solving worldwide health problems. Crosswind led an influencer and media-outreach campaign that resulted in extensive coverage and standing-room-only attendance.

Connect with us and see what we can do for you.

EDELMAN

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Susan Isenberg, 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,



#BeTheGift, a national campaign developed by DCI Donor Services and FINN Partners, is putting pride in organ and tissue donation! If you are a donor, visit www.BeTheGiftToday.com to get a Big Red Bow and share!

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 Susan Isenberg, Global Chair, Health Sector: susan.isenberg@edelman.com.

EVOKE | PR & INFLUENCE

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Maryellen Royle, President

Evoke PR & Influence is the global, award-winning public relations and stakeholder engagement division of Evoke, a leading marketing, media and communications agency that is bound by a common purpose of making "Health More Human™." Evoke PR & Influence

uses its knowledge, influencer relationships, and proven experience to connect leading industry organizations with the audiences that matter most. We translate the science behind health and wellness companies, products and services into meaningful stories that get heard, always striving to achieve our clients' objectives on time and within budget.

Evoke has offices in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, London, Chicago, Los Angeles, Singapore and Dubai, working with leading pharmaceutical companies worldwide with a group of 550+ employees. For more information, visit <http://evokegroup.com>.

FINN PARTNERS

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Arielle Bernstein Pinsof, MPP,
Partner/Chicago

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Gloria Bohan Founder & CEO Omega World Travel & Godmother of Windstar's Star Legend
and John Delaney, President of Windstar Cruises

Photo by Chris Owen for Windstar Cruises.

Omega World Travel
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FINN PARTNERS

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Emily Shirden, Partner/Detroit
Mina Volovitch, Senior Partner/
 Paris
Yeap Yin Ching, Managing
 Partner/Singapore

Finn Partners offers a bold vision and expertise that delivers creative communication solutions for payer, provider, patient advocacy, health policy and product-innovation clients.

Named “2018 Healthcare Agency of the Year” by *The Holmes Report*, we leverage our collaborative spirit to advance client goals — to improve consumer health and wellbeing. With 600+ PR professionals across 16 offices and three continents, we offer health-sector depth in brand support, corporate thought-leadership, social responsibility, public affairs, market research, and digital, social and traditional media.

Finn Partners is best known for its work in changing the lives of people with pressing health challenges — from introducing new medicines and technologies that improve and extend life, to rallying communities around company social impact goals, to raising awareness of global public health challenges.

Finn Partners’ more than 100 health clients include some of the boldest innovators and game-changers across the health ecosystem: Abbott, Agenesis, Amarin, Backpack Health, BelongLife, BioTelemetry, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Centerstone, Clarity, EarlySense, Epstein Becker Green, Equashield, Galien Foundation, IIVI-RMA Global, LifePoint Health, The Lustgarten Foundation, Merck, NextGen, Somatix, Sterling Partners, Veterans Healthcare and Zott, plus several top-five pharmaceutical companies and some of the nation’s largest hospitals and payer systems. From medical innovations to breakthrough health/tech to services that improve care, all of our clients focus on the most important part of the health system — patients.

FLEISHMAN-HILLARD

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Anne de Schweinitz, Global
 Managing Director, Healthcare

Whether the imperative is to maintain or grow a business, or



Greenough teammates brainstorm cures for what ails healthcare marketing.

to defend it in the face of an ever-shifting policy environment and intense competition, clients from across the healthcare spectrum turn to FleishmanHillard for deep industry expertise, powerful insights and effective strategies that deliver real results.

FleishmanHillard’s 300+ healthcare specialists work alongside experts in reputation and brand marketing, earned and paid media, digital and social, public affairs, issues and crisis, and change management, forming seamless teams that deliver the diverse communications counsel and bold creative approaches that today’s healthcare organizations need to succeed. Our team is stacked with scientific, regulatory and behavioral change experts, including PhDs and credentialed health professionals, who form the technical backbone of our global healthcare practice.

Using data-driven insights and deep knowledge of today’s most effective communications channels, FleishmanHillard works across a broad range of therapeutic categories and the full care continuum, from public education and prevention to acute care and chronic disease management, supporting our clients to educate, influence and drive action with health professionals, patients and consumers, health systems, payers, and policy makers at home and around the world.

Please contact Anne de Schweinitz, Global Managing Director, Healthcare: anne.deschweinitz@fleishman.com.

GCI HEALTH

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Wendy Lund, CEO

GCI Health is an award-winning integrated communications agency built around and inspired by the ever-changing face of healthcare. Our passion is not only to communicate change but inspire it while always finding the most effective ways of putting patients as people first. With a deep focus on multichannel marketing, we help clients breakthrough with powerful stories that build brands and engage customers — all while using the channels that are best suited to reach and resonate with various target audiences. Working across the entire healthcare spectrum, GCI Health offers clients an accessible senior-level leadership team, a commitment to beating expectations, and an obsession with anticipating the challenges of an increasingly complex and transforming communications environment. Through our innovative approach, clients always remain focused on why they chose GCI Health in the first place ... improving people’s health and wellness.

GREENOUGH BRAND STORYTELLERS

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Phil Greenough, Founder and
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Scott Bauman, EVP and General
 Manager

Greenough Brand Storytellers has strategically built a healthcare and life sciences practice on a foundation of industry insight and brand storytelling. This foundation is strengthened by constant interac-

tion with thought leaders, consumers, buyers and influencers within hospitals, clinics, urgent care facilities, rehab facilities, immunotherapy centers, diagnostic labs and universities. We serve as healthcare brand journalists, chronicling the industry’s most important changes through the voices of the people shaping the transformation.

Whether our client is a health system looking to increase physician engagement or a medical robotics company trying to elevate brand awareness among consumers, we reach into a network of patients, physicians, hospital administrators, practice managers, health insurers and business leaders who are central to the story. Stories can only resonate when they have context, and we’ve made it our business to understand the evolving stories shaping healthcare today. Finding stories and contextualizing them — daily — is precisely what we do at Greenough.

HEALTH UNLIMITED

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 Communications

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.

We offer full-service communications for pharmaceutical, health & wellness, medical, biotechnology, diagnostics and devices, strategic marketing, media strategy, corporate counsel, issues management, product marketing, patient/consumer education and professional/advocacy relations.

HUNTER PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Partners: **Grace Leong, Jonathan Lyon, Mark Newman, Donetta Allen, Gigi Russo, Erin Hanson**
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(Samara Farber Mormar)

Hunter Public Relations is an award-winning consumer products and services marketing communications 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's 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 and retailers including Johnson & Johnson, Church & Dwight, and The Vitamin Shoppe, Hunter 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.

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Hunter helped client, The Vitamin Shoppe, celebrate the launch of a new sports nutrition product, available only at The Vitamin Shoppe, by hosting a circuit-style fitness class at PERFORMIX House in NYC where editors and top-tier health and wellness influencers broke a sweat and sampled the new product.



This is a refurbished Art-O-Mat cigarette machine imre used at a digital event activation where the inside was populated with artistry inspired by how patients with COPD feel.

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 and products, inform clinical and investment decision making, raise your profile across prospective VCs and institutional investors, 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. Our team is well con-

nected within the healthcare investment community and has partnered with management team through the transition to public ownership and beyond.

IMRE HEALTH

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Kirsty Whelan, Vice President of Strategy, imre health

imre Health is the social and digital marketing agency pharmaceutical brands turn to in order to find new ways to make meaningful connections with patients and HCPs.

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LaVoieHealthScience Offering Specialized Expertise in Health and Science Innovations

IMRE HEALTH

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The agency has begun to counteract cold, clinical digital experiences by infusing empathy in its approach to marketing. In 2018, Imre Health partnered with the Columbia Digital Storytelling Lab to conduct empathy training for all of its team. The agency also developed a first-of-its-kind Empathy Brief that both governs their creative approach, and brings them closer to patients by beginning with a simple question, “how do you feel?”

Imre Health has helped many pharma brands create or enhance their social and digital marketing programs, including:

- Launched the first open-comment, branded Facebook community
- Developed effective social media strategies for black box drugs
- Delivered one of the first live broadcasts in social media for pharma
- Introduced virtual reality storytelling for cancer patients, in partnership with Google Tilt Brush
- Created the first lead generation strategy using Instagram Stories
- Developed one of the first interactive chatbots

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Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock, Inc. is a strategic communications consulting firm devoted to helping healthcare providers navigate

change, challenge and opportunity. Ranked a top-10 firm nationally, Jarrard Inc. has guided leaders at more than 400 healthcare organizations across the country through high-stakes moments, including leading communications for more than \$45 billion in announced hospital M&A. Our team of former journalists, political operatives and healthcare executives is built to serve the unique needs and challenges of national health systems and academic medical centers; regional and community health systems; and health services companies.

JPA HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS

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Michael O'Brien, **Stephen Piotrowski** and **Diane Wass**,
Managing Directors

JPA Health Communications is an independent, full-service agency. Our exclusive focus on health means that our life science, nonprofit and federal clients can count on a team with experience and perspective to deliver results. Our approach incorporates a proprietary tool that enables us to understand how conversations take place within the health sector. JPA's Gretel™, brings together news media, organizations and individual influencers to show for the first time precisely how they intersect, revealing insights for reaching and engaging audiences. Importantly, at JPA, we share our clients' commitment to improving and protecting lives. This ideology

inspires our work. We invite you to learn more by contacting one of our offices: Washington, DC; Boston; and London.

KYNE

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Julie O'Donnell, Global Head of Digital

KYNE is an award-winning specialty health communications agency dedicated to helping improve and save lives. We were founded on the belief that communication is a powerful health intervention. We have deep experience working with foundations, non-profits, government organizations and biopharmaceutical companies around the world to address the most pressing health issues. Our team is passionate and committed, with deep experience working across sectors to make real differences in health. But our greatest strength isn't just our ability to connect the dots. It's in creating programs that achieve real change, leveraging our skills, expertise and passion to break down barriers. We develop and deliver tailored programs to meet each clients' goals and objectives. We love what we do, we live what we do, and we truly believe in what we do.

Key Clients: AstraZeneca, The

Carter Center, World Federation of Hemophilia

LANDIS COMMUNICATIONS

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Named America's #1 Healthcare PR Agency (Ragan's Ace Awards) and called “the Bay Area's consumer/B2B PR and marketing communications experts,” San Francisco-based Landis Communications Inc. (LCI) is celebrating more than 25 years in business. LCI is a Bulldog Award winner for social media and media relations and has been named the #1 Social Media Agency in the U.S. by Top-PRAgencies.com.

LCI is a full-service public relations, digital/social media and marketing communications agency that specializes in healthcare, consumer, consumer technology and B2B programs. LCI's Promised Results© return-on-investment program provides tangible metrics addressing clients' identified goals. Healthcare clients include: Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford, University of California at San Francisco, Global Alzheimer's Platform Foundation, Brain Health Registry, Merck, Johnson & Johnson, Planned Parenthood, OnLok Senior Health Services, Crestwood Behavioral Health and more. LCI is a member of the Public Relations Global Network, with 50 affiliate agencies worldwide.

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LaVoieHealthScience provides integrated communications including public and investor relations as well as marketing and digital communications to build recognition, sales, and value for health science innovations. Our team of specialized thinkers design and execute strategic communications pro-

grams that make our clients' technologies, products and services known, understandable and approachable. Our vision is to apply industry-tested counsel and pragmatic execution through our highly experienced and trained professionals. The agency has received over 35 awards in recognition of the work it has done for emerging and established industry leaders in life sciences, pharmaceuticals, health, and government. We bring 17 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: Biotechnology Innovation Organization; Emmaus Life Sciences Inc.; Landos Biopharma, Inc.; LEO Science & Tech Hub (Leo Pharma, Inc.); Life Sciences Corridor; NewLink Genetics Inc.; Newron Pharmaceuticals, SpA; Origenis GmbH; Pathmaker Neurosystems Inc.; Scioto Biosciences, Symbiotix Biotherapeutics; Triumvera Immunologics; Xenotherapeutics Inc.; Xontogeny, LLC, and other emerging health and science companies.

LAZAR PARTNERS

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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 17 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.

MATTER

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Matter is a Brand Elevation Agency unifying public relations, social media, creative services, search marketing and digital marketing to create strategic, content-rich communications campaigns that inspire action and build value. Founded in 2003, with five offices spanning North America, Matter works with the world's most innovative companies across healthcare, high-technology, consumer-technology and consumer markets.

With offices in Boston and Newburyport, Mass., Providence, R.I., Boulder, Colo., and Portland, Ore., Matter is one of the fastest-growing public relations, social media, creative and digital marketing firms in the country. Matter has won seven "Agency of the Year" accolades in the past three years and has been recognized numerous times as a best place to work.

MCCABE MESSAGE PARTNERS

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Bethany Hardy, Vice President

Like a stone meeting water, effective communications expand to reach and motivate many au-

diences. Washington, DC-based McCabe Message Partners helps clients create their own ripple effect, focusing solely on health and the issues that affect it.

The agency is comprised of 30 team members who bring experience in journalism, market research, public policy, consumer advocacy, corporate communications, and non-profit management. Individually and together, team members have won the biggest awards in the PR business.

Clients include a who's who of healthcare philanthropies, government agencies, academic institutions, patient organizations, corporations, associations, and groups that represent clinicians.

McCabe Message Partners offers the expertise and professionalism of a large agency with the warmth and passion of a small business.

MCS HEALTHCARE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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

MERGE ATLANTA

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Tom Brand, President
Keir Bradshaw, EVP
Mark Samber, SVP

Dodge Communications is now MERGE Atlanta, a marketing communications and technology agency for healthcare.

As MERGE Atlanta, we leverage earned, owned, paid and shared strategies to drive engagement, experiences, conversations and conversions. Our DNA lies in healthcare, leading with passion and purpose to help companies of all sizes drive action, motivate behaviors and inspire change.

With 70 local employees, our agency has built lasting partnerships with hundreds of clients across the healthcare landscape, including healthcare IT companies, hospitals and health systems, payers and life science organizations.

Our single-minded focus in healthcare and excellence in client services have been responsible for upward client growth trajectory and retention and serves as a testament to our strategies that engage prospects, optimize interactions and promote businesses.

MERGE Atlanta operates under the MERGE network with offices also in Chicago and Boston. For more information, visit mergeatlanta.com or call (770) 998-0500.



The team from McCabe Message Partners — a DC-based healthcare agency — celebrates the holidays in style with scarves and accessories in the firm's corporate colors.

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

PADILLA

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Fred Lake, Senior Vice President/
Health Lead

Padilla is an independently operated, globally resourced public relations and communication company with offices across the United States. The agency builds, grows and protects brands and reputations 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 Research Advisors.

Clients include 3M, Barnes &

Noble College, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Be The Match, Blood Centers of America, Cargill Animal Nutrition, Mayo Clinic, Rockwell Automation, Sano Pasteur and VCU Medical Center, 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 an AVENIR GLOBAL company and is a founding member of the Worldcom Public Relations Group, a partnership of 132 independently owned partner offices in 115 cities on six continents. Connect with purpose at PadillaCo.com.

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Darlene Doyle, Senior Vice President, Co-Lead Client Relations

Gene Carozza, Senior Vice President

Dan Martin, Senior Vice President
Nikki Festa O'Brien, Senior Vice President

Megan Kessler, Senior Vice President

PAN Communications is a data-driven integrated marketing & PR agency servicing B2B technology and healthcare brands. With offices in Boston, San Francisco, New York and Orlando, we move ideas by creating compelling stories, driving intent and influencing markets across all forms of media. We currently work with several leading and emerging brands nationally and globally including SAP, Radial, MediaMath, Cogito, Sift Science, Maestro Health and UpWell, to name a few.

With a staff of 140+ 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. An award-winning firm experiencing impressive growth, we thrive to help today's modern marketers by integrating a combination of services to better engage with your audiences and move markets.

Connected Content — Creative Storytelling — Results that Matter!

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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.

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Kassy Perry, President & CEO
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Perry Communications Group is an award-winning public affairs and strategic communications firm. Led by Kassy Perry, PCG shapes ideas, galvanizes opinion and influences decisions leading to social, regulatory and legislative change.

Whether the politically savvy PCG team is managing a complex 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. For more than 20 years, PCG has successfully worked on behalf of *Fortune* 50 corporations, major industry trade associations, government agencies and charitable organizations at the state and federal level.

Clients include: Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation, California Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Center for Inherited Blood Disorders, Chronic Care Coalition of California, City of Weed, County of Sacramento, Del Mar International Horse Show, Insure the Uninsured Project, Jack Russell Rescue of CA, Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), Sacramento International Horse Show, The SCAN Foundation, West Health Institute, West Health Policy Center and ZGlobal, Inc.

PORTER NOVELLI

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Maura Bergen, Executive Vice President, U.S. Health Lead

Porter Novelli is a global public relations agency born from the

idea that the art of communication can advance society. Over 45 years ago, we opened our doors — and people's eyes and minds — for brands driven to make a positive impact. Today, we are a global agency with the entrepreneurial spirit of boutique specialists. We continue to build that bridge between purpose and business imperatives, and believe that a healthy bottom line can also make a remarkable impact.

We are passionate people, driven by purpose and grounded in health. We believe in the power of collaboration and connection in shaping the future. Our integrated process and bold approach drive impact across policy, public health, advocacy, and products.

Our health practice comprises over 200 experts in more than 30 cities worldwide. We are the agency that launched the first Anti-Tobacco campaign. We have been working on the HIV/AIDS crisis for decades. We are experts in aging and its effect on society. We work across the entire health ecosystem for patients. We share knowledge across borders, apply the best worldwide talent to client problems and manage business seamlessly across geographies. Our extensive knowledge about developed and developing markets allows us to create programs that are globally relevant and locally sensitive.

For more information, contact Maura Bergen, Executive Vice President, U.S. Health Lead: Maura.Bergen@Porternovelli.com.

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Jill Allread, APR, CEO
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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 cam-



Panelist speakers at rbb's Breakout Brand Healthcare Symposium Event — How Emotions Play a Role in Healthcare Innovation. From left: Lily W. Lee, President, Almata Health; Judith Mitchell, CEO, NextScience; Daniel Höglund, Chief Design Officer, VeryDay, McKinsey & Company; and Srikanth Ramaswami, Executive Vice President, Global and Emerging Markets, Healthcare, rbb Communications.

paigns for clients ranging from advocacy organizations and medical and allied health associations to *Fortune* 100 corporations; pharma, device manufacturers, biotech 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 communications; 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.

RACEPOINT GLOBAL

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Larry Weber, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer

Ginger Ludwig, VP, Global Marketing & Business Development

Racepoint Global's approach to innovation guides everything we do. For our healthcare and life science clients, we apply our deep understanding of the media landscape, the changing dynamics of communicating complex stories in a regulated environment and the connection to the varied needs of global stakeholders. Our unique blend of services allows us to challenge our clients to meet the needs of today's conversations. Thought leadership programming provides our clients a method and an engine for delivering unique viewpoints via content types that break through to audiences. Racepoint Global is headquartered in Boston, with offices in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Raleigh, London, Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen.

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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 Wash-

ington, D.C., Rasky Partners offers a comprehensive range of services including media strategy and public 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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Christine Barney, CEO and Managing Partner
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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

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RASKY PARTNERS

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public health issues, rare diseases, and NGOs.

Other specialty practices of the agency include consumer, B2B, education, entertainment, travel, real estate, professional services and more. rbb's family of brands offers media relations, digital marketing, influencer engagement, creative/advertising, crisis management and mergers and acquisition communications. With offices in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, New Jersey and Los Angeles, the firm also has international reach across 50 countries through its partnership in PROI Worldwide, the largest global network of independent communications agencies.

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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 as a cohesive team, we develop tailored campaigns that produce measurable and meaningful results — every time. Representing leading foundations, associations, research institutes, health systems, corporations, and universities, we offer clients a team of talented, experienced communications experts who provide a depth of knowledge, and proven successes in health, healthcare, and science communications.

Our services include: media relations, thought leadership, issues management, science promotion, social media, web sites, message testing, clinical trial recruitment, market research, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy promo-

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

tion.

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

Partial client list includes: American Gastroenterological Association, Banner Alzheimer's Institute, Blue Shield of California Foundation, Digestive Disease Week, Duke Integrative Medicine, Health Care Cost Institute, Nemours Children's Health System, Society for Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America, Society of Interventional Radiology

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Brandon Edwards, CEO

ReviveHealth, a Weber Shandwick company, is a full-service agency focused on 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 to address core healthcare marketing challenges.

ROSICA COMMUNICATIONS

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Chris Rosica, President

Rosica Communications is an integrated PR and online marketing agency specializing in thought leadership, corporate and brand positioning/messaging, marcom strategy and content and influencer marketing. Our marcom and PR capabilities also include earned media, social media management, crisis communications, corporate communications, cause marketing, direct marketing and media training. Founded in 1980, the firm serves a diverse healthcare clientele including healthcare delivery,

insurance, medical device, B2B healthcare, medtech, nonprofits, industry trade associations and animal health.

Rosica's social media services include strategy, social management, branding, content development/optimization and follower acquisition. Our online marketing team is a Google Certified Partner specializing in SEO, online reputation/reviews management, SEM (PPC plus social and display ads), website development, WordPress security and cyber security training.

As a "thinking partner" focused on achieving our clients' objectives, Rosica creates and executes thought leadership programs with clearly defined KPIs/metrics. We craft compelling, authentic stories and messaging then effectively disseminate our client-partners' good news while supporting their sales and communications goals.

Our process includes:

- Strategically identifying our clients' business and marketing goals/objectives
- Identifying target audiences, influencers and key opinion leaders
- Honing the positioning, story and key messages, tailoring messages to each audience
- Training KOLs to deliver memorable messages
- Developing measurable, integrated and creative PR, social media and internal/external communications programs
- Proactively communicating with clients
- Aggressively securing results,

evaluating against pre-determined strategic objectives and metrics

• Repurposing and leveraging content and PR coverage to augment SEO, sales activities, online reputation, tradeshow/conference marketing, analyst relations and direct marketing.

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Sard Verbinnen & Co (SVC) is a leading strategic corporate and financial communications firm recognized for its work in M&A, corporate positioning and profile raising, shareholder activism, restructurings, corporate governance, public affairs executive changes, crisis communications, special situations, litigation support, IPOs and cybersecurity.

With more than 200 employees across its eight offices in New York, Chicago, Washington D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, London, Houston, and Hong Kong, SVC's highly experienced senior professionals are uniquely positioned to provide high quality, objective advice and execution support to clients across a broad range of in-

Continued on page 68

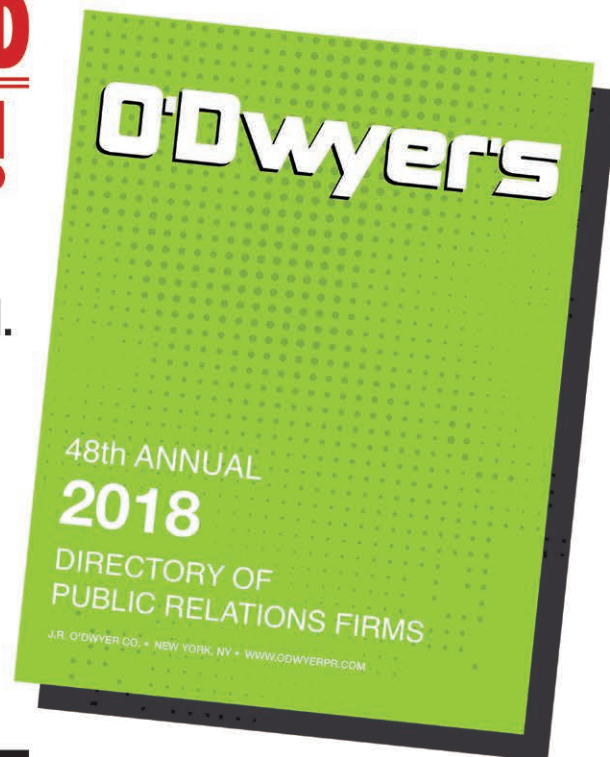


As part of The Reis Group's commitment to health and social causes, the team regularly volunteers at SOME (So Others Might Eat) serving meals to the poor and homeless of our nation's capital.

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O'Dwyer's is the #1 source for researching public relations firms and outside PR counsel. We've been connecting clients and PR firms for 47 years through our directory of PR firms.

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



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

- ✓ *Has brought billions of dollars in business to PR firms.*
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- ✓ *Firms ranked by 14 geographical regions in the U.S.*
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- ✓ *Cross-Client Index: O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms is the only place you can look up a company and determine its outside counsel.*

"O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms is the finest source of informations on PR firms."

—Howard Rubenstein, President
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"Up-to-date, indispensable resource. Saves time and money. Every PR pro should have one."

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

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

SARD VERBINNEN & CO.

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dustries. SVC professionals draw on deep experience in finance, law, media, public affairs, corporate governance, and investor relations.

Founded in 1992, SVC's services and capabilities include media relations, investor relations, market intelligence, perception studies, brand awareness, creative digital content production, video production, social media and online communications, customer and partner communications, employee communications and issue advocacy.

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Jonathan Wilson, Owner,
President & CEO

Spectrum is both one of the nation's leading health and science communications agencies and proudly independent. Health and science communications is the only thing we do. We live and breathe science and storytelling and clients reap the benefits of our relentless dedication. While many agencies have a dedicated healthcare practice, Spectrum is further specialized to deliver the most relevant strategies and counsel with five unique practice areas: biotech, biopharma, consumer science, health tech and public affairs.

We take an integrated, strategy-first approach to all communications programs. By sitting digital, social, science, media and account strategy team members side-by-side, Spectrum drives synergies for clients and creates seamless strategic and tactical executions that engage audiences to deliver on clients' business goals. This breadth of expertise brings a unique mix of scientific rigor and contemporary smarts to all of our work across a full suite of communications services.

Spectrum is the founder, US partner and chair of GLOBAL-

HealthPR, the largest independent health and science communications agency partnership worldwide. This year, Spectrum was named "Top Millennial Company" and "50 Fastest Growing" by *The Washington Business Journal* and a "Best Agency to Work For" by *The Holmes Report*.

TREVELINO/KELLER

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Eclipsing the growth of the firm's other practices, Trevelino/Keller has established one of the more progressive health practices in the Southeast. Its ability to cross fertilize its health practice across technology, lifestyle, franchise and food/beverage has been the catalyst for successful business development and client service. Sought after areas include medical software and cloud applications, biotech, women's retail health, wellness franchising, telemedicine, health resorts and more. Clients include Centers for Disease Control, Biocept, Pritikin Longevity Center, Stretch Zone, Ciox Health, SOC Telemed and more. With four dedicated markets — disruptive forces, category pioneers, stealth leaders and wonder women, the agency's mission is to work with a new generation of visionaries in need of public relations, digital/social marketing, demand generation and creative services.

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 15 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 that serves clients across the healthcare industry including 23 of *Fortune's* top 25 pharmaceutical companies, device manufacturers, biotechnology leaders, and payers/providers. It employs over 700 people in 14 offices across the United States and in Europe. W2O employs proprietary analytics models, methodologies and approaches in a digital world to design precise communications and marketing strategies to deliver the right solution and sustained business results. W2O incorporates Insight Integration, a strategic approach based on unearthing transformative insights from data/analytics and integrating them — across all marcom disciplines — to arrive at a precise solution for clients' business needs. The goal is to create an Unfair Advantage for clients who face dramatic challenges in a shifting environment by following the right data to get to the right solution. The right data clarifies the audience, what matters to them, and where the client's brand fits in their lives.

The W2O network includes W2O wcg, W2O twist, W2O pure, W2O marketeching and W2O sentient. For more information, please visit www.w2ogroup.com.

WEBER SHANDWICK

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Laura Schoen, President, Global
Healthcare Practice

Weber Shandwick's fully integrated, 360-degree approach makes us uniquely qualified to help clients navigate the ever-evolving healthcare marketing landscape. With wide-ranging experience and expertise working with healthcare companies, associations, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter medications, biotechnology, insurance and health maintenance organizations, health systems and hospitals, and consumer health product, it's fair to say that we understand the healthcare sector like no one else. Our team of 800+ is well versed in regulations and restrictions related to healthcare specific content in the U.S. and across the globe. Weber Shandwick is the nation's first communications and marketing services firm fully certified in promotional regulatory compliance using the training and testing standards of The Center

for Communications Compliance (CCC).

Weber Shandwick's Element Scientific Communications practice is our "GPS System," helping our team and clients stay grounded in scientific data and supporting each claim with the strongest evidence backed by relevant studies. Supporting clients with data publications and regulatory milestones are just a few of the core capabilities we offer all of our medical device, pharmaceutical, and biotech clients. It's just one of our many differentiating strengths as an agency.

WEISS PR, INC.

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Founded in 2008, Weiss PR, Inc. helps companies and associations reach, engage, and influence the right audiences in order to achieve their communications and business objectives.

Staffing accounts exclusively with senior-level executives who have a minimum of 10 years of public relations experience, Weiss PR has developed a strong reputation for getting positive results for clients by using an integrated communications approach that includes media and influencer relations, social media and marketing services, and crisis communications/issues management — all anchored by strategic communications planning.

While Weiss PR's clients are concentrated in five industry sectors, the firm has become particularly known for its work in healthcare and employee benefits, where its clients include Alera, Benefit Advisors Network (BAN), Confidio, ConnectYourCare, The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Patient First.

Because we understand the rapidly changing healthcare and regulatory environment, our work for these clients focuses on generating brand awareness and thought leadership, while positioning them to respond to changes in the marketplace which have the potential to impact their future growth. And as with all of our clients, we provide our healthcare and employee benefits clients with innovative ideas built on strategy — not egos — from a team of senior public relations professionals who are committed to providing exceptional service, great work, and measurable results. ○

O'DWYER'S RANKINGS

TOP HEALTHCARE & MEDICAL PR FIRMS

Firm	Net Fees (2017)	Firm	Net Fees (2017)
1. Edelman , New York, NY	\$157,315,000	35. Standing Partnership , St. Louis, MO	1,164,089
2. W2O Group , San Francisco, CA	124,263,000	36. CooperKatz & Co. , New York, NY	1,135,475
3. APCO Worldwide , Washington, DC	27,523,600	37. Jackson Spalding , Atlanta, GA	1,104,841
4. Health Unlimited , New York, NY	25,890,471	38. Tunheim , Minneapolis, MN	1,004,850
5. Spectrum , Washington, DC	24,000,000	39. Landis Communications , San Francisco, CA	865,000
6. Finn Partners , New York, NY	17,251,000	40. Gregory FCA , Ardmore, PA	828,150
7. Crosby , Annapolis, MD	13,987,802	41. Trevelino/Keller , Atlanta, GA	800,000
8. Tonic Life Communications , Philadelphia, PA	12,000,000	42. L.C. Williams & Associates , Chicago, IL	711,639
9. Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock , Brentwood, TN	9,866,079	43. LaunchSquad , San Francisco, CA	675,000
10. KYNE , New York, NY	9,696,497	44. Bellmont Partners , Minneapolis, MN	656,392
11. Coyne PR , Parsippany, NJ	9,300,000	45. French West Vaughan , Raleigh, NC	612,500
12. JPA Health Communications , Washington, DC	9,182,471	46. Rosica Communications , Paramus, NJ	601,604
13. Padilla , Minneapolis, MN	6,425,767	47. Singer Associates, Inc. , San Francisco, CA	582,971
14. IMRE, LLC , Baltimore, MD	5,950,000	48. North 6th Agency, Inc. , New York, NY	481,431
15. Lazar Partners , New York, NY	5,393,183	49. Merritt Group , McLean, VA	479,100
16. 5W Public Relations , New York, NY	4,400,000	50. Marketing Maven PR , Camarillo, CA	432,033
17. MCS Healthcare PR , Bedminster, NJ	3,823,501	51. Pierpont Communications , Houston, TX	401,839
18. Public Communications Inc. , Chicago, IL	3,395,186	52. Greentarget Global LLC , Chicago, IL	387,500
19. Matter Communications , Newburyport, MA	2,887,874	53. WordWrite Communications LLC , Pittsburgh, PA	335,422
20. Hunter PR , New York, NY	2,750,000	54. Maccabee , Minneapolis, MN	297,376
21. PAN Communications , Boston, MA	2,661,255	55. Bradford Group, The , Nashville, TN	198,707
22. Lovell Communications , Nashville, TN	2,573,953	56. Brownstein Group , Philadelphia, PA	182,647
23. Rasky Partners, Inc. , Boston, MA	2,476,977	57. Perry Communications Group , Sacramento, CA	168,822
24. Greenough , Boston, MA	2,348,055	58. BoardroomPR , Ft. Lauderdale, FL	150,000
25. Beehive Strategic Communication , St. Paul, MN	2,196,332	59. Power Group, The , Dallas, TX	129,713
26. LaVoie Health Science , Boston, MA	2,117,940	60. LANE , Portland, OR	117,668
27. Racepoint Global , Boston, MA	2,085,947	61. SPM Communications , Dallas, TX	99,558
28. Moore, Inc. , Tallahassee, FL	2,033,710	62. Schneider Associates , Boston, MA	97,328
29. Bliss Integrated Communication , New York, NY	1,848,000	63. Weiss PR, Inc. , Baltimore, MD	85,967
30. rbb Communications , Miami, FL	1,480,794	64. Fish Consulting , Hollywood, FL	80,000
31. Inkhouse , Waltham, MA	1,399,483	65. The Buzz Agency , Delray Beach, FL	68,300
32. Merryman Comms, Inc. , Redondo Beach, CA	1,229,868	66. BLAZE , Santa Monica, CA	57,781
33. MP&F Strategic Communications , Nashville, TN	1,213,137	67. O'Malley Hansen Communications , Chicago, IL	41,000
34. Lambert & Co. , Grand Rapids, MI	1,188,000	68. Hollywood Agency , Hingham, MA	4,200

Humanity/humility: the secret weapons of PR

By Fraser Seitel

The headline in the unabashedly liberal/virulently anti-Trumpian *New York Times* was so jarring, it had to be re-read to be believed: “Trump Hit Iran With Oil Sanctions. So Far, They’re Working.”



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*.

The story went on to explain that, despite predictions, Trump’s unilateral decision in May to withdraw from the Iranian nuclear deal would neither cause oil prices to spike or isolate the U.S. as the only nation not trading with Iran. “But,” concluded the *Times* in what may have been a first, “the policy has been effective

without either of those nasty consequences, at least so far.”

Few people, of course, noticed the *Times*’ grudging commendation of the man liberals love to hate. Indeed, while more objective observers might credit this President for a roaring economy, lowering jobless rate, increased take-home pay for most Americans, détente with North Korea, not to mention having the chutzpah to demand for the first time in history that U.S. trading partners stop taking us for granted and play fair, Trump’s approval numbers continue to sink.

But why?

The answer is that the President, who, objectively, might have achieved more in two years than any of his recent predecessors, is also widely perceived as the most odious, offensive and polarizing political personality in anyone’s lifetime. In other words, he lacks the two secret weapons for public relations success: humanity and humility.

Humanity basically means showing compassion for others. Humility, on the other hand, is the quality of being humble, of not seeing yourself as the one and only best of the best.

In recent weeks, we’ve seen the best and the worst of these two qualities on display in a variety of headline quarters.

Christine Blasey Ford v. Judge Brett Kavanaugh. The Ford/Kavanaugh hearing, which satiated the nation’s political blood-

lust but didn’t much benefit the quest for justice, is Exhibit A for humility.

Dr. Ford showed herself a quick learner from the week long-presentation training crash course her Democrat Party handlers provided. She came across as sincere, confident, helpful, naïve but earnest in easily parrying the disjointed questions from the Republicans’ bumbling prosecutor. She was a picture of humility, backed by certainty, which clearly won points for the anti-Kavanaugh constituency.

The judge, up until that fateful hearing, also comported himself with both humility and humanity, remaining deferential throughout his confirmation grilling, as the parade of posturers preened before the cameras. Facing Armageddon at the Dr. Ford showdown, Kavanaugh’s even-keeled demeanor flipped. Buried in a withering barrage of unsubstantiated and damning public allegations designed to destroy him, Kavanaugh had little choice but to go full-out Clarence Thomas and lash out at his accusers.

The humility he had demonstrated earlier had understandably taken a back seat as he fought for his life.

There was no humility to be found in the case of sex offender **Bill Cosby** who, despite all the evidence against him, refused to utter one word of contrition or apology. He remained imperious over many years, even as evidence against him mounted.

Unlike the Kavanaugh case, Cosby’s guilt was never in doubt. His decades-long preying on vulnerable women was indefensible. Long ago, his goose, as they say, was cooked. Nonetheless, even at the moment of his finally coming to cloture for the crimes he committed, Cosby — through a spokesman, no less — insisted he was framed and being made a scapegoat. In the final analysis, Daddy Huxtable lacked humility and humanity.

Tiger Woods, on the other hand, evidently took time during his medically induced sabbatical from public life to learn the virtues of these two indispensable traits.

Tiger, you’ll recall, was once the world’s greatest golfer, whose successes knew no limit, until he was caught up short by dodging a golf club thrown by his wife, crashing his car and being exposed as a serial philanderer. After divorce, treatment for sex addiction, losing his golf game and undergoing four back surgeries, in September Woods won his first PGA golf tournament in five years.

In his post-tournament interviews, gone

was the arrogance and diffidence and robotic answers that marked the pre-crisis Woods. Instead, Tiger answered questions sincerely, thoughtfully and even humbly, correctly thankful for the second chance he’d been given and reluctant to predict that he would soon — or ever — return to the form of old.

Tiger had discovered that a dose of humility — even if you might be the best in the world — goes a long way.

Perhaps he could teach that lesson to his friend **Serena Williams**.

Williams, clearly the best women’s tennis player ever, suffered a major meltdown at last month’s U.S. Open Finals, which, despite being defended by many broadcast and print tennis toadies, demonstrated that the racket queen has a long way to go on the humanity/humility scale.

After an umpire’s questionable but legitimate call that she had received illegal coaching, Williams went wild. First, she excoriated the official for having the nerve to imply she was a “cheater.” Then, after losing a point, she demolished her racket and, in a display of breathtaking hubris, demanded the umpire “apologize” to her and then, for good measure, called him a “thief” and a “liar.”

Not only did Williams’ selfish tantrum ruin the day for Naomi Osaka, the young Japanese-American champion who beat her handily, it underscored that the mega-talented/mega-wealthy Serena, like the President, still has a lot to learn about the public relations power of being humble and human. ○

PR news brief

Troubled MDC Partners mulls strategic options

MDC Partners, parent of Allison + Partners, Sloane & Co, KWT Global and Hunter PR, is exploring its strategic options.

The Wall Street Journal reports the decision follows client cutbacks, failure to win new business, pressures from a heavy debt load and the exit of CEO Scott Kauffmann earlier this month.

MDC reported a 2.8 percent second-quarter revenue decline to \$380 million and a plunge in net income to \$1.1 million from \$8 million. Organic growth dropped 1.7 percent.

Six-month revenue dropped 3.9 percent to \$706.7 million. Net loss widened to \$30.1M from \$1.7M.

In releasing the financials, Kauffmann had warned that 2018 “continues to be challenging.”

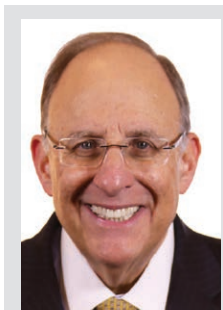
MDC’s stock price tumbled 60 percent over the past year, currently trading at \$4.55 per-share.

The company is using investment firm LionTree to plot its future direction.

Maximize your profitability

By Richard Goldstein

I was going through the papers in my office the other day to see what could be filed in the recycle bin. In the course of doing so, I found a publication written by Ron Baker in 1997 on how to maximize fees.



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

The publication — Ron called it a handbook — was written for the CPA profession but nevertheless I think his words apply to the PR industry as well.

What do your customers — I use “customers” here in place of clients — buy from you?

Most would answer this question with “knowledge and expertise.” Others might offer specific deliverables. This type of answer focuses on the technical aspects of providing services to a customer, and isn’t incorrect but tends not to focus on the customer benefits that you, as a PR professional, are providing. The premise, then, is that you can’t begin to understand the selling process unless you understand the buying process.

What needs to be understood is the buying process from the customer’s perspective, and how you can arrive at a better understanding of this in order to implement a value pricing strategy.

Your customers are really buying two things: good feeling and solutions to their problems. As an example, the manufacture of Rogaine is selling hope! In summary, customers are really buying one thing when it comes right down to it: expectations.

Your goal — or challenge — is to discover that those expectations are remembering no two customers are alike, and no two of them engage your agency for exactly for the same reason.

Are your customers rational?

The quick answer is no! According to Allan Bores, your potential customers buy emotionally and justify intellectually. As an example, earthquake insurance sales rise dramatically after an earthquake. Intellectually, we know for the most part that the probability of another earthquake occurring hasn’t increased, but to the customer it

doesn’t matter nearly as much as the peace of mind that arrives after making such a decision.

What’s the cost of buying?

If a customer objects to your price, it’s usually due to one of two reasons: fear (usually emotional, not logical); or the fact that they want a better deal.

Concerning the first objection, you must play the role of a therapist and try to draw out the fear within the customer and prove to him or her that it’s not justified. If you are successful, the customer will most likely agree to your terms.

The second objection can be dealt with in many ways. One way is to offer a Fixed-Price Agreement. Sometimes it’s a good idea to let the customer decide their own payment terms, if the price is paid in full within 12 months. This type of approach allows the customer to budget their PR services precisely.

When meeting with a customer to set a Fixed Price Agreement, try and sell more services that will give value to the customer. The more services they buy, the more willing you’ll be to adjust the pricing. The logic here is that selling additional services to an existing customer is more profitable than to a potential customer because there’s a lower learning curve, less write-off risk and more opportunity to utilize your professional staff.

Questions you must ask a potential customer (next month I’ll tell you what must be asked before you determine price).

The following are some open-ended questions you should ask your customers:

1. What do you expect of us?
2. What keeps you up at night?
3. If price isn’t an issue, what role would you want us to play in your business?
4. What do you like about working with your current PR agency? You learn more from success than failure. Emulate what they like and then ask ...
5. What don’t you like about dealing with your current PR agency? You don’t have time to make all the mistakes yourself, so learn from the mistakes made by others. However, don’t insult the customer for two reasons: (1.) It insults the customer (nobody likes to feel like they made a bad decision); and (2.) it degrades the PR profession.

So, what are some of the requirements to institute value pricing?

You can reduce the chances of violating the customer’s expectations by spending more time planning the engagement and

discussing the value your agency provides. This allows you to exceed the customer’s expectations and command higher prices for your services. Value pricing is easier to engage in when the following characteristics exist: quality customers, effective communication and total quality service.

In terms of total quality service, you must take care of your customers emotionally and psychologically, rather than just meet their PR needs. This is one area that your competition can’t match; in fact, most don’t even notice it, so doing so makes an enormous competitive difference.

One last thought: offer an unconditional money-back guarantee if the customer isn’t satisfied with your service. This has several advantages, one being it gives the customer an incentive to complain. Most of your customers will usually not share their reasons with you. Instead, they’ll simply move on to another PR agency. You may already be doing this if a customer complains loudly enough!

Become a total quality service agency! All things being equal, you should command a higher price as a TQS agency, offering perks such as a money back guarantee, than those without it.

Think about it. I know there’s risk and the concept is controversial. ○

PR news brief

Mark Penn’s Stagwell gets Ink

The Stagwell Group has taken a majority stake in Ink, the London-based travel media and marketing company.

The firm creates digital, video, print and experiential content for clients such as American Airlines, Qatar Airways, United Airlines, Virgin Atlantic, Norwegian Air, Singapore Airlines and Etihad Airways.

Ink joint CEOs Michael Keating and Simon Leslie will continue to oversee the firm, which has offices in New York, Miami, Sao Paulo, Singapore and Abu Dhabi.

Ink teams with travel companies to help them connect in a meaningful way with passengers at crucial moments in their journey, said Stagwell CEO Mark Penn.

“Travel numbers around the world are growing year on year and they are very valuable and receptive consumers — a perfect audience for any marketing plan today,” added the former advisor to Bill & Hillary Clinton, Microsoft chief strategy officer and Burson-Marsteller CEO.

Ink is the 18th investment made by Stagwell during the past three years.

That roster includes Finn Partners, SKDKnickerbocker, The Harris Poll, PMX Agency, TargetedVictory, National Research Group and ReputationDefender

Chevron's Koetzle powers API's D.C. push

Bill Koetzle has joined the American Petroleum Institute as VP-Federal Affairs.

He represented Chevron for the past decade, departing as Federal Government Affairs Manager. At Chevron, Koetzle was responsible for legislative, regulatory and political affairs.



Bill Koetzle

He spent time in Asia, working government relations, internal & external communications in support of the energy giant's holdings in six nations, including China.

Koetzle turned his sights on D.C. in 2015, handling duties that include Chevron's advocacy for tax and environmental matters.

Before Chevron, he worked on Capitol Hill as deputy Republican Staff Director for the Energy & Commerce Committee and assistant to the former Speaker Denny Hastert. ○

Hernandez heads for NCTA

The NCTA—Internet & Television Assn., has added Saul Hernandez as VP-Government Relations.

Most recently, the 15-year Capitol Hill veteran served as Deputy Chief of Staff for North Carolina Democratic Congressman G.K. Butterfield. His duties included oversight of the 20-member staff and advising Butterfield on telecommunications policy.

NCTA represents broadband and pay TV businesses that account for 90 percent of the U.S. cable market. Michael Powell, former FCC chair, heads the group. ○

Capitol Hill pro MacDonald joins FTI's health unit

Charlene MacDonald, a Capitol Hill veteran who was senior policy advisor to House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, has joined FTI Consulting in D.C. as Managing Director in its strategic communications unit.

Prior to joining Hoyer's office, MacDonald was senior advisor for Medicare & Social Security on the Senate Budget Committee. She also was deputy chief of staff to Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-PA), handling policy matters including the launch of the Affordable Care Act.

John Capodanno, Americas head of the strategic communications unit's healthcare & life sciences unit, says clients will benefit from MacDonald's expertise as "drug pricing, regulatory reforms, outcomes-based healthcare systems and the digital revolution, the healthcare industry is going through a convulsive transformation." ○



Charlene MacDonald

GPG makes Myler managing director

Katie Myler, a Burson-Marsteller alum who was previously Senior Media Advisor to former U.K. Labour Party head Ed Miliband, has joined Glover Park Group, where she's been



named a Managing Director in the government affairs firm's strategic communications practice.

Myler joins GPG from fellow WPP unit Burson-Marsteller, where she served as global practice managing director and was based in the PR giant's London and New York offices.

Previously, she served in the British Government as special advisor to both the Home Secretary and the UK Department of Health.

At GPG, Myler will provide crisis, strategic and media counsel. She'll be based in New York. ○



Katie Myler

Tech tops lobbying sector for influence

Lobbying groups representing the U.S. tech and healthcare industries are recognized as the top-performing trade associations inside the Beltway, and the best positioned to drive members' agendas on Capitol Hill, according to an annual research study of Washington policy leaders released by APCO Worldwide.

APCO's study ranked the efficacy and influence of various advocacy groups in D.C. by measuring their performance across 15 different characteristics — everything from multilateral impact to coalition building to media relations to self-regulation — in a bid to determine how much impact those associations have in shaping policy in the eyes of stakeholders.

For the last three years, organizations representing healthcare have won as the top-performing lobbying sector. For the first time, however, technology beat out healthcare as the most effectively-viewed advocacy area, taking top slot in grassroots, events, media relations, bipartisanship, social media, self-regulation and as an industry reputation steward. Healthcare, meanwhile, won in multilateral impact, lobbying, local impact and an information resource.

Financial services and energy and extraction were also advocacy sector winners in several categories.

APCO's survey also identified the ten specific associations seen as top performers across those characteristics. The top-ranked associations were the American Medical Association (taking the top slot in four categories) and the Consumer Technology Association (winning in three categories), followed by the American Bankers Association, PhRMA, the National Association of Manufacturers, CTIA, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the American Gas Association, Edison Electric Institute and the Society for Human Resource Management.

APCO's annual TradeMarks study surveyed 340 policy congressional staff, executive branch officials and private sector executives. Research was done by the agency's in-house research team, APCO Insight. ○

Afghanistan picks Piper as tempo builds for U.S. exit

Afghanistan has brought on DLA Piper to handle its communications with U.S. government officials as president Trump has expressed his desire to “Get the Hell out of Afghanistan.”

Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis made an unannounced visit to Kabul last month in an effort to restart peace talks with the Taliban.

The US team met with Afghanistan president Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah to discuss peace talks and other issues, according to the Sept. 7 *New York Times*.

It reported the Americans departed from previous U.S. insistence that talks with the Taliban should begin with the Afghan government, which the Taliban dismiss as a “puppet regime.”

The U.S. invaded Afghanistan 17 years ago in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks.

The firm bills the Afghans on an hourly basis. ○

Ex-solicitor general Olson toils for Saudis

Former U.S. Solicitor General Ted Olson spearheads the Saudi Arabia embassy's effort to defeat passage of the No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act, a measure that would allow the US government to file price-fixing lawsuits against OPEC members for antitrust violations.

Congress has weighed various versions of NOPAC since 2000, according to a report in Bloomberg. Senators Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Mike Lee (R-UT), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Pat Leahy

(D-VT) introduced the latest NOPAC rendition.

Saudi Arabia, which pumps a third of the world's oil, is the largest member of OPEC.

The Saudis agreed to pay Olson's firm, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, a flat fee of \$250,000 for its NOPEC work, according to its Aug. 29 agreement with the D.C. law firm.

The engagement calls for an additional flat monthly fee of \$100,000 per month for Olson's preparation time, in the event the Saudis want him to hold meetings with members of Congress. ○

Ex-Sen Lott lobbies for former Trump biz partner

Former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott is lobbying on behalf of the Silk Road Group, private investor firm, that was once a business partner of the Trump Organization.

Based in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia, Silk Road Group inked a deal in 2011 with the Trump Organization to use its name on a \$250 million 47-story residential tower to be built in the Black Sea resort city of Batumi, which is Georgia's second largest city.

Donald Trump officially announced the licensing deal during his visit to Georgia in 2012. Silk Road Group and the Trump Organization terminated their relationship in 2017 following the election of Trump as U.S. president.

Giorgi Ramishvili, Silk Road Group CEO, told Reuters in 2017 the only reason the deal was killed was because Trump was elected President “and could not continue business abroad as it would pose a conflict of interest.

Ramishvili added that he believed Trump would “keep Georgia on his mind” during his presidency. ○

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.

Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, LLP, San Francisco, CA, **registered Sep. 10, 2018 for Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo**, Republic of Kosovo, to provide legal advice and support for government relations and public communications activities.

DiNino Associates, LLC, Washington, D.C., **registered Sep. 20, 2018 for The Democratic Party of Moldova through Cornerstone Government Affairs**, Chisinau, Moldova, to provide counsel on communicating priority issues in the United States-Moldovan bilateral relationship to relevant audiences, including Congress, the executive brand and policy community.

BLJ Worldwide LTD, Washington, D.C., **registered Sep. 7, 2018 for Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Panama**, Panama, to develop an international communication and public relations strategy that positions Panama as a transparent country with great investment opportunities.

Energy Resources International, Inc., Washington, D.C., **registered Sep. 10, 2018 for Tenam Corporation**, Washington, D.C., to complete a white paper regarding US uranium production costs and schedule in response to proposed quotas in the Section 232 Petition now under consideration by the Department of Commerce. Tenam is a subsidiary of TENEX, a ROSATOM enterprise. State Atomic Energy Corporation ROSATOM is a government corporation of the Russian Federation.

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.

American Federal Lobbying Firm, Fort Lauderdale, FL, **registered Sep. 24, 2018 for Israeli Government**, Jerusalem, Israel, regarding more than \$900 million in financial aid to Israel and to protect the interests of the Israeli government in Washington, D.C.

TeleMedia Policy Corporation, Washington, D.C., **registered Sep. 24, 2018 for Vivid Seats LLC**, Chicago, IL, regarding legislative and regulatory matters relating to the online event ticket market.

Cove Strategies, Alexandria, VA, **registered Sep. 20, 2018 for Samsung Electronics America**, Washington, D.C. regarding 5G, STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics education) and trade issues.

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, LLP, Washington, D.C., **registered Sep. 17, 2018 for Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**, Washington, D.C., regarding the No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act of 2018.

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j public relations
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J Public Relations

530 7th Ave., #502, New York, NY 10018

212/924-3600

letstalk@publicrelations.com

www.jpublicrelations.com

Employees: 65. Founded: 2005.

Agency Statement: J Public Relations (JPR) is an international luxury PR and social media agency specializing in hospitality, travel and luxury lifestyle brands with offices in New York City, London, Los Angeles and San Diego. JPR is a trusted leader in media relations and brand strategy, trend forecasting, brand partnerships, influencer relations, social media strategy and unparalleled media placements worldwide.

Established in 2005, the award-winning agency has consistently risen to become the country's fastest growing, bi-coastal agency in the travel and hospitality spaces. JPR's global roster includes more than 125 hotels in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Caribbean, Dubai, Europe, New Zealand, Asia and more. JPR steadily garners and retains notable clients including Relais & Châteaux, Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts, Vail Resorts Hospitality, Grace Hotels, InterContinental Los Angeles Downtown, Newport Beach & Company, Four Seasons Lanai and 15 Ritz-Carlton Hotels & Resorts.

JPR is listed on the Observer's annual "PR Power 50" as one of the country's most powerful PR firms. The agency also garnered "Top Places to Work" by PR News and "Agency of the Year" by Bulldog Reporter in addition to multiple trade and consumer awards for company culture and brand success.

Jamie Sigler O'Grady, Sarah Evans, partners

Locations:

New York

530 7th Ave., #502, New York, NY 10018

212/924-3600

San Diego

2341 Fifth Ave., San Diego, CA 92101

619/255-7069

Los Angeles

429 Santa Monica Blvd., #280, Santa Monica, CA 90401

310/722-7066

London

14 Gray's Inn Rd., 3063, London, WC1X 8HN, UK

(011) 44 (20) 38905838

Sampling of highlighted clients:

Adare Manor, Ireland
Adventures by Disney (project work)
Aulani, a Disney Spa & Resort (project work)
Chateau du Grand-Luce, France
Chewton Glen, UK
Cliveden House, UK
Discover Baja California
Four Seasons Resort Lanai
Golden Oak Development by Walt Disney World Resort
Grace Hotels
Grand Hotel Tremezzo, Lake Como
Gurney's Resorts - Montauk & Newport
Helena Bay, New Zealand
Hotel del Coronado
InterContinental Los Angeles Downtown
InterContinental, Washington DC - The Wharf
Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts
Newport Beach & Company
Rancho La Puerta
Rancho Valencia Resort & Spa
Regent Seven Seas Cruises (project work)
Relais & Châteaux
The Palms and The Shore Club, Turks & Caicos
The Private Suite at LAX
The Resort at Pedregal
The Ritz-Carlton Hotels (15 properties)
Vail Resorts Hospitality
Vail Mountain Resorts



Jamie Sigler O'Grady & Sarah Evans,
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One-year subscription to O'Dwyer's magazine, now in its 32nd year. Each issue covers not only current topics and stories, but focuses on one of the PR specialties such as health-care, food, technology or finance. PR firms are invited to profile their special practices in each issue.	\$60
2018 O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms, the only printed directory of its kind!	\$95
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or contact Melissa Werbel, Director of Research, 646/843-2082, melissa@odwyerpr.com

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