The Fashion Issue

Why visual content is king online.

Hard knocks: how to break into the beauty & fashion industry.

Which social media sites are most influential for fashion?

The formula behind America's fashion magazine covers.

Why celebrity endorsements are meaningful stories.

Why is naming online.

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“PR Day” flops in the U.K., but a need remains.

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SOCIAL MEDIA’S BUSINESS IMPACT EXAGGERATED
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BLOOMBERG FAULTED ON PAST DATA POLICIES
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PR BUYER’S GUIDE

EDITORIAL CALENDAR 2013

January: Crisis Comms. / Buyer’s Guide
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April: Broadcast & Social Media
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June: Global & Multicultural
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November: High-Tech
December: Entertainment & Sports
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“PR Day” flops in U.K. — but a need remains.

In case you missed it, the first “PR National Awareness Day” was held July 27 in the U.K. It was an initial bid to tell PR’s story to U.K. businesses, but instead touched off a chorus of mostly negative comments up to and including ridicule by journalists and PR practitioners themselves.

The abortive inaugural of “PR Day” in the U.K. brought out slams at PR in the BBC News Magazine and Financial Times. The “irony” of the failure of PR Day to get much publicity for itself was called “so delicious it has to be fattening,” in a tweet at #PR by Rhi Jenks that was quoted by Emily Smart, Editorial Assistant at CorpComms Magazine.

Creators of PR Day said July 27 was picked because it marked the first anniversary of the 2012 London Olympics ceremony “which profiled PR at its very best.” “The main aim,” says the website of PR Day, “is to encourage business to embrace the opportunity to make their mark, raise their profile and address their public. No matter how large or small, whether it’s a product or a services, everyone can use PR to their advantage.”

Examples of successful PR efforts were said to be Red Bull’s Cosmic Jump from Space; Dove’s Real Women Campaign; Calendar Girls of WI Ladies (a veterans auxiliary group), and Cadbury’s drumming gorilla. Taking part in the Day were said to be organizations all over the country with PR activities such as “free promotional merchandise, money off vouchers, bespoke events and parties, Olympic branded themes, social media marketing, and tweets.”

Benjamin Webb of Deliberate PR, billed as a “long-serving PR expert” by the BBC, wrote “There is an irony that an industry all about the construction and manipulation of image might itself suffer from an image problem.”

He said his “heart sinks” whenever anyone asks him what he does for a living.

Webb’s 1,064-word essay, which quotes Ed Bernays as saying those who “manipulate the opinions of the masses” constitute the “true ruling power of our country,” asks: “Why does this, the worst-paid of the marketing disciplines, engender such disbelief, whereas other sectors are tolerated, even considered cool? Why has the negative phrase ‘It’s just a PR stunt’ entered common parlance to suggest something ephemeral and without substance, merit or legitimacy?”

He blasted the “deluge of badly-written press releases, silly events and photo stunts, ‘news stories’ without news value, and meaningless ‘campaigns’ that have come to irk journalists and bore an increasingly cynical general public.” He also wondered why Bernays did not consider “manipulating opinion” to be “socially corrosive.”

Among numerous comments to the essay is one by “Dev” of Manchester who notes Bernays “was also highly influential on Joseph Goebbels, who used the power of propaganda and manipulation of the public consciousness to devastating effect …”

Webb concludes by saying, “In the digital age, credible interactive content is king …”

Brian Groom of The Financial Times, saying Webb’s remark that “The writing is on the wall for the traditional consumer-focused PR model” is a forecast of “the death of the sector,” wrote: “It looks like goodbye PR people. It was sometimes interesting, and often aggravating, to know you. I am sure we will miss you when you are gone.”

A similar blowback occurred after 2011 PR Society of America chair Rosanna Fiske told The New York Times ad columnist Stuart Elliott that she could not explain what she did for a living to her parents.

More than a dozen PR groups worldwide eventually were recruited for the task. However, the resulting definition, that PR “maintains mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics,” satisfied almost no one.

Dave Rickey, 2012 PR Society secretary, admitted the failure in a posting on spin-sucks.com that drew numerous comments. He said the question of what PR is remains open.

The attacks on PR present a problem for Hamden, Conn., consultant Laura Freebairn-Smith, who has been hired by the PR Society to refurbish the image of PR accreditation for its 50th anniversary in 2014.

— Jack O’Dwyer
Knowing what’s coming next is the key to success.
New York Times records profit

The New York Times Co. in August reported a $20.1 million second-quarter profit, a big upswing from the $87.6 million loss it suffered during the same period a year ago. Revenues, meanwhile, dipped 0.9% to $485 million, and shares were down 1.5% to $12.06.

New York Times CEO Mark Thompson attributed the profitable performance to the “ongoing evolution of our digital subscriptions initiatives on the circulation side, the moderation of revenue declines on the advertising side and the continued focus on managing costs.”

The company enjoyed a 40% year-to-year surge in paid digital subscriptions to 738,000.

Digital ads, which remained flat at $51.2 million, accounted for 24.7% of overall ad revenues.

The company’s New England group (Boston Globe and Worcester Telegram & Gazette) recorded $94.4 million in revenues, down 7.4% from 2012. The New York Times Co. will soon unload that operation.

Looking ahead, Thompson said the company is “on track with our strategic growth initiatives.”

By Kevin McCauley

NYU prof: social media’s business impact exaggerated

A New York University study has found that fewer than 3% of the traffic going to websites of major brands and advertisers is coming from social media while 33% of the traffic is coming from consumers doing searches for products and services.

Social media, placed in context, isn’t having as large an impact as originally thought on the business world,” said Scott Galloway, clinical professor of marketing at the Stern School of Business.

It was once thought that Facebook would be “a huge point of distribution for retailers” but that hasn’t happened, he told Bloomberg Editor-at-Large Tom Keene August 4 in a 2.34-minute segment titled, “Social Media’s Diminished Impact on Business.”

Facebook and Twitter serve as “funnels” to direct consumers to websites where they experience banner ads, he said.

He called Facebook “the most nimble of companies with a billion-plus in sales” because it has created products that are accessible to hand-held devices. About 41% of its ad revenues are now from mobile devices, he said.

Companies are still interested in SM because they want to be seen as innovative to their audiences and because they are still trying to “figure out and experiment” with SM, he added.

“But there are telltale signs of a blowback” against SM, he said. The number of job listings in SM has been declining and the pay “is not what people thought it would be.”

Business school grads are showing interest in e-commerce rather than SM, he said.

Companies reach stakeholders via SM

While the NYU study shows that search engines rather than SM are driving buyers to company websites, that does not mean that SM has little value to organizations.

They are using SM, blast e-mails and their own websites to communicate directly with constituents and customers and are putting less effort into media relations. SM is a way for them to engage, and perhaps mobilize, individual stakeholders.

Some organizations have just about washed their hands of media because they feel the press does not treat them fairly.
Bloomberg faulted on past data policies

A probe conducted to review Bloomberg LP’s data policies and procedures found that, since May, the company has appropriated controls to prevent reporters from accessing subscriber information. The news comes after complaints were filed against the company regarding the data security of its financial terminals.

Prior to May, Bloomberg News journalists had access to the private data of clients via Bloomberg’s financial terminals. This drew highly-publicized criticism, notably from Goldman Sachs, who mulled eliminating or reducing its use of the ubiquitous Bloomberg LP terminals.

Hogan Lovells law firm and Promontory Financial Group compliance shop examined more than 500,000 news stories, conducted 425 interviews with staffers and conducted 230,000 tests of client data systems.

The investigations were conducted after banker complaints that Bloomberg reporters were obtaining sensitive information. The probes found no instances of recent widespread abuse and determined that any past breach stemmed from “misunderstandings.”

Former IBM CEO Samuel Palmisano, who was hired by Bloomberg’s board to review its policies, said the reports are “thorough, objective and comprehensive.” He said Bloomberg’s management recognized the need for a more comprehensive set of policies and procedures. They acted quickly to enhance their existing structures and put more resources behind this critical priority.”

Bloomberg also retained Clark Hoyt, former Editor-at-Large at Bloomberg News and Public Editor of The New York Times, to review the relationship between its editorial and commercial arms.

In his statement, Bloomberg CEO Dan Doctoroff said, “We know we needed to evolve, and we have learned from our mistakes.”

Judge dismisses defamation charge against PR firm, ESPN

A Texas court in August dismissed defamation and other charges against Spaeth Communications and ESPN in a suit by former Texas Tech football coach Mike Leach.

Leach was fired by Texas Tech University after allegations in 2010 that he mistreated a student athlete – the son of an ESPN analyst – who suffered a concussion. He sued the firm and network, along with the analyst, Craig James, alleging defamation, tortious interference and conspiracy. The suit alleged James hired Spaeth to create “public opinion hostile to Leach,” in part by posting online a video of the student-athlete being disciplined.

“Spaeth Communications — and the other defendants for that matter — won summary judgment because the truth made its way into the record,” said Scott McLaughlin, attorney for Spaeth at the law firm Jackson Walker. “Spaeth has always taken the position that it would not try this case in the media, being fully confident in the Lubbock County judicial system. Spaeth’s confidence was obviously justified and our entire law firm is very happy for Merrie and her colleagues.”

The district court granted summary judgment for Spaeth, ESPN and James, dismissing all claims. Spaeth’s attorneys argued a “substantial truth” defense, which asserts that if a statement is substantially true even though some minor facts are inaccurate, it should not be considered defamatory.

Leach, whose suit against Texas Tech was dismissed earlier this year, is now the head football coach at Washington State.
Practical tips for breaking into beauty/fashion PR

As a publicist who has worked for some of the biggest names in fashion and beauty, I’m often asked: “What’s the secret to breaking into this industry — and succeeding?” The truth is, there’s no silver-bullet answer or tried-and-true formula. Success in the beauty and fashion industry often comes after years wrought by trial and error.

By Alexis Rodriguez

If you’d like to figure out whether you have what it takes to succeed in this industry, here are a few practical tips that may help you on your way:

**Love what you do.** First and foremost, you have to be passionate about the industry. If you cannot appreciate textures, fabrics, silhouettes, the intricacy of a stitch or beading, or a designer’s vision, you’ll be a lousy fashion publicist. If you don’t love makeup and skincare, you won’t enjoy being a beauty publicist. If you love the industry you are working in, you are more likely to thrive.

**Grow a thick skin.** PR is a tough business. You deal with demanding clients and the ever-evolving media landscape. You lose more pitches than you win. You can’t be shy or too sensitive. You need to toughen up and keep up or the industry will eat you alive.

**Be a sponge.** Take in everything and go the extra mile to learn about your client, industry, competitors, retail partners, consumers, etc. You need to know all there is to know about your industry in order to contribute impactful communications strategies.

**Keep up with the news.** Read everything from People.com to The New York Times to Fast Company. Take in as much as you can outside your particular industry. It’s your job to be aware of current events and pop culture, and to know a lot about a lot, even if you don’t think it applies to what you do. Random things I read or hear about often creep up in conversations or inspire creativity.

**Know the company you keep.** Research what is going on in the beauty and/or fashion industries including trends, events, emerging talent, changes in leadership, partnerships and collaborations, etc. If you want to compete, then you need to know who you are competing against.

**Understand social media.** Social media is a crucial part of any integrated PR strategy. You will get left behind if you don’t start posting, pinning, tweeting, instagramming, hashtagging…you get the point. #startnow

**Understand there’s no “I” in team.** This job is not one you can do alone. It takes a village, and sometimes a whole country, just to get through one day.

**Fine tune your writing skills.** If your writing and grammar are not up to par, or if you simply dislike writing, then PR might not be for you, as you will always be writing. Writing is to PR what medicine is to doctors. We can’t do our jobs without it.

**Link in.** Your network is everything, so be prepared to put yourself out there constantly. You have to attend industry events, lunches, dinners, meetings — basically anything that will introduce you to new people. Your connections make or break you as a publicist.

**Keep your eyes and ears open.** In PR, you always have to find new opportunities to place your client, and if you work at an agency, you constantly need to look out for new business opportunities. Be open and creative.

**Patience is a virtue.** Know that in PR, you hurry up and wait, you pitch and wait, you plan an event, invite guests, and wait. You need to be patient. Sometimes you get results quickly. Sometimes you have to wait.

**Learn how to listen.** Sometimes brands become guilty of talking to themselves and forget to listen to who really matters — the consumer. For publicists, it is the consumer and the press. Listen to them. You’ll find they have a lot to say that you can leverage when putting together your PR strategies.

**If this all sounds good...**

So, if you still feel like you have what it takes to succeed in beauty/fashion PR, my three best pieces of advice to “break in” are as follows:

**Intern.** You should try to secure as many internships as possible, starting as early as possible. Not only will this beef up your resumé, but it will open doors for you and expand your network.

Internships can also solidify your passion for beauty/fashion and help you identify your strengths. Internships are crucial, as the best way to learn the ins and outs of any job is on the job.

**Take the right courses.** If you are currently in school and you know you want to work in beauty and/or fashion PR, start taking the right classes. If you don’t go to a school with an accredited PR or fashion program, take related courses like writing, speech or marketing 101, but then sign up for some specialty PR courses through sites like MediaBistro.com. If you are switching careers, you can do the same. Taking a few courses or interning will help you build a solid PR foundation.

**Network.** As the saying goes, when you are not working, you should be networking. Reach out to someone at a company you want to work for (or simply admire) to set up an exploratory interview, or send an e-mail to someone in the industry and ask if you can speak with them about their career path. Most people are willing to lend a few minutes to help. The more people you meet, the more windows of opportunity you are opening.

Breaking into any industry is never easy. Just keep in mind that everyone has their own career path. Some people do everything by the book and never get ahead. Some people take alternative approaches and make it to the top. There is no rule book for launching a beauty/fashion PR career. Yes, who you know can be helpful at times, but it is what you know and how you apply that knowledge that will get you closer to your goal. Hopefully, you now have a little bit of a head start.

Alexis Rodriguez is the Executive Director of Public Relations, North America, for Bobbi Brown Cosmetics. She also runs the blog The PR Closet, an advice column focused on how to break into beauty and/or fashion PR.
The Society, whose 2013 Treasurer is Blake Lewis of Dallas, does not break out the quarter in posting the first half on its website, forcing members to do their own arithmetic if they want to find out what happened in the quarter.

The H1 report is on the PRSA website and, as usual, there is no accompanying text or explanation.

Society officers and staff traditionally do not discuss the financial results nor answer press questions about them.

A call and an e-mail have been sent to Lewis, who ran against Kathy Barbour of Baptist Health South Florida for chair-elect in 2014 but was defeated. Lewis instead was nominated as secretary.

$30 dues hike does not halt slide

The $30 dues increase in 2011 to $255 has failed to erase the red ink in the Society’s financial report.

Dues income for H1 was $3,022,230, a gain of $114,945 from dues of $2,907,285 in 2012. Dues for the second quarter were $1,222,584 vs. $1,216,439 in 2012, a gain of $6,145.

The Society has been offering at various periods for many months free chapter dues, free section dues and at times a waiver of the $65 initiation fee for new members.

New and current members also get free access to webinars which previously cost $150 each.

Total membership, which was 20,266 in 2000, is currently “21,000” according to the Society website, indicating very little growth in 13 years.

Revenues for the half were $5,493,255, a gain of $249,305.

However, expenses rose to $5,511,974 from $5,273,744, a gain of $238,230. There was an operating loss of $29,794 in the first half of 2012.

Investments show gains

A profit of $66,924 on investments was reported for H1 2013 vs. a profit of $119,465 in H1 2012.

The Society, as of December 31, 2012 had common stocks worth $1,389,723 and corporate bonds and preferred stock worth $1,012,160, according to the 2012 audit.

The H1 financial report says “investments” as of June 30, 2013 totaled $3,951,882 vs. $3,900,840 on December 31.

By Jack O’Dwyer

PR Society of America has reported an operating loss of $18,719 for the first half of 2013. The news comes after the association reported an operating profit of $403,048 during their first quarter.

PRSA reveals first-half $18K loss, despite dues hike

$2,767,309 reported for the same half in 2012.

Rent, utilities and maintenance rose to $432,736 from $373,469.

Fourth biggest expense, after $673,352 on supplies, is “professional fees,” which rose 46% to $337,408 from $230,881, a gain of $106,527.

This could be from hiring consultant Laura Freebairn-Smith of Hamden, Conn., who is working on a program to rekindle interest in the Society’s accreditation program. The number of new Society APRs in the past ten years is less than half of the new APRs that were created in the previous ten years.

The organization has never had outside PR counsel although it has spent $558,264 on legal counsel in the latest eight years.

It is withholding publication of the 2012 IRS Form 990 report which would disclose legal costs for 2012 and the pay packages of the eight Society staffers who earn more than $100,000 yearly. Original deadline for submitting the 990 was May 15. This report has been withheld from the last three Assemblies.
The formula behind fashion magazine covers

Ever wonder how fashion editors choose cover shots? You may have noticed that while each cover is tantalizing, it’s always delivered in a peculiarly familiar way. The fact is, there’s a clear formula behind America’s fashion magazine covers, and understanding how this formula works reveals the thought processes behind them, and ultimately, what fashion editors want.

By Carrie Leber

While fashion trends come and go — and famous faces cycle in and out of cultural hipness — we, the malleable masses, are all basically the same. While the fashion industry remains nuanced and complicated, you and I, the consumer, are very simple.

To be clear, we’re talking about the newsstand cover here, not the snazzy and sincerely artistic subscriber’s covers that have come into the norm. We’re talking about the newsstand impulse buy, where Elle faces off with Harper’s Bazaar in a battle royale for your latte money.

Many art directors have given interviews on how their teams decide what to put on their covers, but at the end of the day, there’s a tried-and-true formula that seems to work month after month in the fashion magazine business.

The celebrity or model chosen is almost always looking right at you, with their best come-hither expression. This can be a gorgeous smile, as with Sarah Jessica Parker on the September 2013 cover of Harper’s Bazaar, or a hungry gaze like tigers in a cage, as with Kate Upton on the September 2013 cover of Elle. It’s not always the most flattering picture an art department can produce — but it’s always a head turner, especially if it makes the unsuspecting shopper uncomfortable.

Depending on the time of year, there is always either a pop of color (red or yellow) or zazzle (usually sequins, and sometimes diamonds). Othertimes, it’s something ridiculous and eye-catching, like the enormous wig Oprah sported on the cover of O Magazine September 2013, or the tiger print dress that Lily Collins is wearing on the cover of this September’s Seventeen.

The background is white, bright, or neutral, allowing the cover model and surrounding captions to pop. While we do occasionally spy Oprah dangling her feet in some water or wandering through a tropical garden (mainly in lifestyle magazines, where a range of topics are covered), there is generally little background competition in the fashion realm. You, the casual grocery shopper, are the prey — and Kate Upton is lying in wait, ready to lock eyes and hypnotize you. Vogue likes to frame their cover models with a cherry blossom sprig or a muted ocean wave to add drama and depth — but the focus always goes to the eyes.

The reason for this formula is simple: it’s proven over years of intense research, trial and error, and test groups to get shoppers to impulsively pop that exciting cover girl into their carts on their way through the checkout stand.

Formula applies to pitches, personal life

Each new season my clients supply me with catalogs of their coming collections. I, in turn, send these to the crowded desks of magazine editors across the world. As you can imagine, the competition is fiercer than what you’d see at the checkout stand. At least in the latter category there’s a captive audience.

In other words, my clients must compete for attention with thousands of submissions to make a handbag roundup or fashion shoot. Often getting an editor to crack open a catalog boils down to the same formula as above. My cover letters are dazzling, and my follow up phone calls are engaging, but my efforts are unquestionably helped by a catalog cover that offers the same appeal here is that often fashion editors are unquestionaly helped by a catalog cover that offers the same

person you want to impress (boss, potential client, love interest)? Yes, I’m about to tell you to get dolled up like Sarah Jessica Parker — at least your version of her sequined glory on the cover of Elle. When you see your target, lock eyes with him/her like a tiger/tigress on the hunt. You have a choice here: seductive or smiling? I think the setting should help you feel your way through that — is it a sunny breakfast, or a steamy nightclub? — but no matter where you are, stay focused and make eye contact. Showing genuine interest is the key element that real people can impart that paper and ink never will. It’s the charm factor that will grab anyone’s attention and hold it.

Think of something compelling to say, like those headlines promising the answers to all of life’s problems. One thing I like to do is scan the newspaper for local and national news that’s upbeat and non-controversial — you want to hold this person’s attention, not start a fight.

Engage them in light hearted banter and the background will fade away like so much white noise, just like on a magazine cover.

That part was easy: the devil is when they open the cover and start turning pages.

Carrie Leber is Founder of Carrie Leber Public Relations.
Why visual is king in digital marketing campaigns

Digital marketing has changed the way brands are seen and want to be seen. By adopting a social strategy online, businesses can vastly increase their visibility.

Social media sites with a visual component are gaining in popularity like never before. There are many business benefits to using visual content in marketing, from recruitment to sales. Visual content humanizes brands: it’s dynamic, it’s entertaining, and it produces a higher share rate. Let’s look at the most popular image-based channels and how businesses can maximize their use for brand storytelling.

The “big four”

YouTube reaches 1 billion users every month, with 100 hours of video uploaded every minute. Pinterest now has 70 million users and the number of Tumblr users is now reaching 111 million. With more than 130 million users, Instagram is also commonly used by individuals and celebrities to share filtered images.

People are now sharing images, videos and gifs faster than texts and links. The evolution towards visual content was evident in a study by M Booth last year, which found that videos were shared 12 times more than text updates on Facebook. This is a trend that’s been confirmed with the recent success of Vine, the mobile app created by Twitter to shoot and share videos only 6 seconds in duration. It now counts 40 million users.

Who to watch

Many new mobile social networks have appeared in 2013. Here are three that I think might be the next big thing in visual storytelling:

• Snapchat, a mobile app where pictures can be sent and then automatically deleted.
• Thumb, a new community that enables picture-sharing where users can ask each other for advice.
• Hi, a mapping platform that lets users share images and stories using geolocalization.

Being visual makes you visible

Before selecting the proper channel to use, you should think about the message you want to share and ask yourself the following key questions:

Do you have the right resources? Sometimes it’s okay to shoot an amateur video using a smartphone because it fits the purpose. However, most of the time you will need good video production and photo editing tools to brand your content.

Does the content fit your brand? Once you publish an image or video it’s out there! The digital world is instant and the consequences of an ill-judged image can be disastrous. Always keep in mind that if you want to use visual content, it has to be fun and dynamic, relevant to your audience and appropriate for the channel whilst, importantly, fitting your brand.

So, who’s getting it right?

Starbucks is currently followed by 1.5 million Instagram users simply because they publish entertaining pictures of its products. General Electric currently hosts a very entertaining Pinterest page with pictures of — to borrow a common term — “badass” machines. GE has also just launched a #6secondscience campaign on Vine to encourage people to submit videos. Coca Cola created a Tumblr account that expounds on the meaning of happiness.

In summary, to successfully integrate visual content into your marketing strategy, what you share must be dynamic and useful — and hopefully, funny. When you get it right, visual content can elevate and differentiate you from the competition.

Audrey Liberge is a Senior PR Consultant & Social Media Strategist at Lewis PR in Paris.
Study: Twitter not preferred platform for fashion

For several years now, fashion marketers have been putting a lot of stock into Twitter. A new study, however, indicates the micro-blogging site may not be nearly as influential among female fashion consumers as blogs or other competing social media channels.

By Jon Gingerich

A recent survey of U.S. women found a majority of those who identified themselves as avid fashion and beauty shoppers may use Twitter, but they don’t consider the platform influential in their buying decisions. On the other hand, women who claimed fashion and beauty were important components in their lives said their purchases were often influenced by content found on blogs and message boards, as well as popular social media alternatives such as Facebook and Pinterest.

The report, titled “Social Channels of Influence in the Fashion Industry,” was released by market research company Edison Research in conjunction with social intelligence group NetBase. It gauged the buying influence of social channels in fashion by polling more than 1,000 U.S. women aged 18 years or older who claimed to have a profile on at least one social media network. The study asked participants about their social media usage, and what influence, if any, these media channels have on their fashion buying decisions in purchases ranging from casual and special occasion clothing to costume jewelry.

The survey’s results separated respondents into two key segments: “Fashionistas,” or those who aligned with the statement that fashion and beauty are “extremely important” in their lives, and “Social Shoppers,” or those who agreed with the statement that brands and products used by their friends are influential in their own purchasing decisions.

The results of the study focused primarily on these two groups (which isn’t surprising, considering their buying power makes them the most valued demographic of all those polled). According to the study, 28% of women polled considered themselves “Fashionistas,” while 15% of respondents fell into the category of “Social Shoppers.”

“Since women account for more than 85% of all consumer purchases in the U.S., these two segments are valuable customers to own because of their buying power,” said Lisa Joy Rosner, CMO of NetBase.

The study found that both the “Fashionista” and “Social Shopper” groups were more likely to have Facebook profiles over a presence on any other social network (according to the study, a whopping 98% of “Social Shoppers” and 97% of “Fashionistas” have a Facebook page).

However, the study found that simply because a consumer has a profile on one or more of these networks, it doesn’t guarantee these social hubs are necessarily influential in their buying decisions. Interestingly, the platforms that drew the most inspiration regarding fashion purchases for both groups wasn’t Facebook, but blogs and message boards. About 64% of “Social Shoppers” said they consult message boards or blogs for inspiration, and 62% of “Fashionistas” admitted doing so.

“It makes sense when you think about it,” Rosner told O’Dwyer’s. “The ‘Fashionista’ looks at blogs and message boards as a place where the experts are. She doesn’t know them personally, but she feels like she knows them. ‘Social Shoppers’ will go to blogs and message boards too, but they’re more inspired by Facebook because that’s where their friends are, and they trust their friends.”

Facebook still maintains a huge role in influencing fashion decisions. The study found Facebook inspires at least one type of fashion purchasing decision for 56% of those deemed “Fashionistas,” and 72% of those who considered themselves “Social Shoppers.”

Approximately 50% of both “Fashionistas” and “Social Shoppers” said they turn to Pinterest for inspiration, and Instagram was a decision-making factor for about 42% of all women polled in the study’s 18-29 age group.

Twitter was cited as the least popular source for influencing fashion decisions. While Twitter was cited in the study as the second most popular social media destination for both key segments (75% of “Social Shoppers” said they have a Twitter profile, and 66% of “Fashionistas” admitted the same) the micro-blogging site polled last — sixth place — as an influencer of purchasing decisions for both groups. Though many of the consumers polled in both key groups admitted having a profile on Twitter, it was not deemed a major influence on their fashion decisions.

The takeaway from this study seems to be two-fold. One, it seems to suggest fashion marketers may want to put more of their outreach efforts into blogs and the (arguably) old-world forums of message boards.

Second, it seems to suggest that while popular, Twitter may be a dead-zone in terms of influencing marketing decisions. This news may bode poorly for some brand marketers, many of whom have been turning a lot of attention to Twitter for the last several years. If the study is any indication, fashion’s most coveted consumer demographic may be ignoring marketing messages on this social site even while use on the site remains high, and fashion marketers’ efforts on this platform, thus, may be for naught.

Rosner posited that, regardless of its immense popularity, Twitter’s lack of visuals could be a reason for its inability to influence.

“Twitter is a constant flood stream. It’s more fleeting. It’s limited to 140 characters where you can only communicate so much, and it’s not nearly as visual as what you’d find on Pinterest or Instagram. You can use Twitter to point someone to a graphic, or to offer a link to something influential, but actual influence isn’t occurring on Twitter, even though people are using it. It just goes to show that you need a different strategy for different channels.”

Rosner said the only time Twitter seems to directly influence shopping behavior is when it involves a celebrity endorsement, or when a company uses its Twitter page to announce a sale or offer a coupon.
New PR head at ProPublica, but will it look at PR?

Nicole Bronzan of Freedom to Marry will join ProPublica September 16 as Communications Director, replacing five-year veteran Mike Webb, who had the title of VP of Communications.

ProPublica, a group of 40 investigative journalists supported by $10.9 million in income last year and which sports some of the world’s highest-paid journalists (eight staffers made more than $200,000 in 2012), has yet to look into PR. Now, we hope it will.

PR people are the main interface with reporters at organizations of all sizes and in recent years have been tightening their grip on the flow of information.

This is not only a U.S. phenomenon but one that is worldwide as evidenced by UNESCO’s 51-page report in 2012 documenting press persecution, intimidation and avoidance worldwide. While the murder of journalists wins headlines, the great bulk of press interference takes place at the local level, said the report. Governments, businesses and trade groups are the culprits, it said.

The National Press Club has taken note of this trend in the U.S., sending a statement on Oct. 20, 2011 to 390 major media scolding the PR Society of America for its press-blocking practices which include barring reporters from its annual legislative Assembly in both 2011 and 2012 after 40+ years of allowing them to cover it. Until 2005, when the PR Society started instituting a raft of information-blocking practices, a 400-page transcript of the Assembly and an audiotape were made available to reporters.

The PR Society, the world’s largest PR organization (21,000 members) should not be engaged in press blocking practices, said NPC, whose statement on Oct. 20, 2011 to 390 major media scolding the PR Society of America for its press-blocking practices which include barring reporters from its annual legislative Assembly in both 2011 and 2012 after 40+ years of allowing them to cover it. Until 2005, when the PR Society started instituting a raft of information-blocking practices, a 400-page transcript of the Assembly and an audiotape were made available to reporters.

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REPORT

Beauty and fashion move toward getting “real”

Celebrity endorsements still increase the profiles of beauty and fashion products, but in some circles the stories of everyday people are taking over as the reigning fashion narrative du jour. The lifecycle and evolution of trends has been more democratized as well, as social media has replaced fashion spreads in its ability to kick off conversations regarding what’s new and exciting in the world of fashion today. These are just some of the insights beauty and fashion PR experts recently shared with O’Dwyer’s.

By Andrea Doyle

What’s a young designer’s dream? How about having Michelle Obama saunter onto a stage wearing his or her dress. Tracy Reese designed the much-publicized dress Michelle Obama wore at the 2012 Democratic National Convention. Not surprisingly, the designer’s sales skyrocketed after the Convention and Reese told The Daily Beast that her website and store were inundated with shoppers.

When Kate Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge, and Prince William were photographed leaving the hospital in late July with Prince George swaddled in a blanket, cyberspace went crazy. The web site belonging to blanket manufacturer, aden + anais based in Brooklyn, New York, actually crashed after the image was released.

Us Weekly recently ran a story titled “Must-Have Baby Gifts” next to a photo of singer Alanis Morissette and her baby that read, “Aden & Anais Swaddling Blankets.”

Celeb baby nurse Bea Thomas raved about these cool covers, which Alanis Morissette claimed to have used to keep her four-month-old son, Ever, cozy. How’s that for publicity?

British company Seraphine also celebrated as the Duchess of Cambridge was recently wearing its blossom knot front fuchsia dress in the official family photograph featuring the new prince. The dress sold out within hours of the photo being released. On the company’s web site the dress is prominently displayed with the declaration: “As worn by the Duchess of Cambridge.”

The takeaway is clear: celebrity endorsements still not only a propel a company’s name into the conversation — they’re still unquestionably lucrative.

“Consumers tend to pay more attention and want a product if there is a celebrity attached to it. We’ve often seen sales rise if there was a mention in traditional or social media about a celebrity using a product,” said Robert McEwen, President and CEO of Zing USA, a company that represents beauty and fashion clients in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. “If Beyoncé endorses a sweater, many of those who buy it will do so not because they decided autonomously that they want it, but because Beyoncé told them they want it.”

One example is Beyoncé’s new blonde bob haircut, as recently revealed by the entertainer on Instagram. The photo created a national social media firestorm, becoming a trending topic on Twitter. The hashtag, #beyhairhead, is where people have since been weighing in about Beyoncé’s new do.

Not surprisingly, many are flocking to hair salons to copy the style. In a single tweet, hair stylists across the country are now confirming Beyoncé has started a new trend.

“With the globalization of media and the instantaneous access to images of stars around the globe, celebrity endorsements are just as important as they were a few years ago, if not more so. Just open up the pages of any top fashion magazine and you will see brand ambassadors and dozens of other celebrity endorsements on the pages of fashion’s top magazines,” said Carla Blizzard, Senior Vice President of the Film Fashion unit of Rogers & Cowan, the world’s leading entertainment PR and marketing agency.

“Real” stories at forefront

Not everyone agrees that celebrity endorsements are as vital to beauty and fashion campaigns as they were several years ago. Jill Wahler, Vice President of New York-based Allison+Partners, a global communications firm headquartered in San Francisco, believes celebrities are now falling by the wayside in favor of a different storytelling point of view: everyday people.

“A celebrity that is truly organic to a brand is a nice way to extend brand awareness, but due to the increase in social networking, transparency, and the all about me platform, celebrities aren’t as indispensable to campaigns as they...
once were. Consumers want to see and hear about trends and information from real women who are relatable and believable. A strong brand story will always be the better path to take,” explained Wahler.

Wahler said the marketing messages that are gaining traction with audiences today focus on a personal experience. “The growing presence of vloggers and bloggers showcasing heartfelt and educational testimonials for products they love are continuing to move products and help increase sales across both the beauty and fashion industries,” said Wahler.

Wahler cited Allison+Partners work with Julep as an example of telling a brand story. “For the past three years, our team has been able to leverage and package the brand’s unique assets to give both media and consumers a comprehensive look at one of the fast-growing beauty brands in the industry. Sharing the CEO and Founder’s story, passion, and drive has given our team a strong foundation to launch new product categories and programs for the brand,” said Wahler. Another example of how that story can be leveraged across media channels can be seen in the popular Dove Real Beauty Sketches campaign. The campaign resulted in almost four billion PR and blogger media impressions as of May 20th, a number that continues to increase. Plus, less than a month after launch, the Dove Real Beauty Sketches film became the number one viewed online video ad of all time. The film, which explores how women view their own beauty in contrast to what others see, has been viewed more than 114 million times to surpass all previously recorded video ads, according to the Viral Video Chart reported globally by Unruly. The Dove Real Beauty Sketches campaign struck an emotional chord with millions of women who recognize that they are their own worst beauty critic. Dove is committed to a world where beauty is a source of confidence and the film reinforces the brand’s commitment to fostering self-esteem in women.

Global launch of coverage highlights resulted in 121 print features, including leading op-ed pieces; 484 major broadcast news and lifestyle segments; and thousands of online articles that have generated hundreds of thousands of comments, likes and shares.

Social media democratizes trends

Social media has had a huge impact on beauty and fashion PR. “Media seem to be consistently fascinated by fantasy as well as the multi-faceted personalities that exist within the industry. A musician or model turned designer tend to grab headlines as well as the notion of making a trend part of everyday wear,” said Wahler. “The increased popularity of Pinterest and Tumblr has people of all ages showcasing how pieces and styles become wearable items. All of that said, new news and product launches will always reign supreme.”

The fashion media is always looking to report on what’s new and exciting. “Whether it is a hot designer like Houghton, an interesting designer collaboration like A Pea in the Pod and Nicole Richie, celebrity or street style trends like Bec & Bridge, having fresh news to share with this specific media niche is important to keep fashion and accessory clients top of mind and in the press,” said Blizzard.

Experts discuss future trends

According to Wahler, for fall/winter of 2013, there is a prevalence of both bold and demure color palettes with a nod to punk rock styles. Stripes, fur, metallic, and leather seem to be grabbing the spotlight on jeans to boots and everything in between. When it comes to beauty, the crimson lip goes with everything and hairstyles range from undone glamorous waves to unique braids and low ponies.

McEwen said marketing messages will illustrate these styles as the most successful ones focus on what’s trending. “Fashion press and blogs like what is trending for their stories. They select items based on trends in patterns, colors, and fabrics. The dry shampoo category is a good example. Many new brands have been introduced over the past four years and there are more to come. We certainly can expect to see more offerings from Batiste, Oscar Blandi, TRESmemme, Dove, Klorane, Suave, Psssssst, and Oribe. Pretty much every big hair company will have a dry shampoo option at some point in the future.”

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Zing USA
President and CEO
Robert McEwen

Allison+Partners
Vice President
Jill Wahler

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5W coordinated an interactive media event at the Oro Gold Cosmetics New York City location to provide Oro Gold with the opportunity to introduce the new flagship store, latest products, and the new celebrity spokesperson, Denise Richards, to beauty influencers and New York media outlets. 5W created an intimate, fun setting that allowed each editor to have a personal experience with the brand, as well as shop the luxurious collection by selecting an assortment of the exclusive Oro Gold products of their choice from the collection. Following the one-on-one consultations and “shop the store” experience, Denise Richards arrived to officially open the Oro Gold NYC location.

5W Public Relations (5WPR) is headquartered in the heart of Midtown Manhattan with an office located in Los Angeles. The 5WPR beauty division understands what it takes for a brand to have a competitive edge in a saturated industry and likewise, gain tremendous coverage in a media landscape that is simultaneously shrinking for magazines and newspapers and expanding to blogs, video and other digital “e-media.” 5WPR navigates this challenge by being laser focused on those initiatives that will affect a client’s bottom line and delivers campaigns that create impactful media, and powerful connections with consumers, retailers, and influencers.

Whether putting a mature beauty brand back in the spotlight or launching a lesser known entrepreneurial company into mass retail, 5W is dedicated to structuring beauty PR programs that will generate millions of media impressions, drive enormous buzz, and create celebrity influence.

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The Allison + Partners beauty and fashion practice breaks the systemic beauty and fashion PR mold, bringing the reach and resources of a global leader paired with the responsiveness and expertise of a boutique group. With years of experience growing some of the world’s leading skincare, fragrance, cosmetics, personal care, apparel and accessories brands, our seasoned beauty and fashion PR experts create breakthrough campaigns that are never one-size-fits-all. We are uniquely positioned to integrate traditional media tactics into 360 degree programs including events, sampling and promotions; digital and social media; retail marketing; sponsorships and strategic alliances; and corporate social responsibility and cause marketing programs that reach consumer audiences and build market share. Our brand experience includes Julep Nail, JOICO, Sexy Hair, Bulova, LaseResults, philosophy, L’Oreal USA, GoodSkin Labs, Bobbi Brown, ASICS and more. We are committed to creativity and innovation — developing brand-specific programs to captivate audiences and get messages heard.

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Lisa Hannum, CEO

Beehive PR, based in Minneapolis/St. Paul, is a strategic communications agency with a reputation for fresh insights, big ideas, controversial energy and brilliant results. Our team of senior strategists and savvy specialists are focused on creating bold, positive growth for our clients. When strategy, creativity and partnership come together, magic happens. Big ideas are born. Brands, influencers and customers connect. Momentum builds. Growth happens. Our team has deep expertise serving the beauty and fashion industry representing clients like 6pm.com, Christopher & Banks, Dayton’s, Dressbarn Stores, J.R. Watkins Naturals, JB Hudson Jewelers and Juut Salonspas.

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Tom Coyne, CEO
Rich Lukis, President
Deborah Sierchio, Vice President, Beauty, Fashion & Retail

Coyne PR is a creative powerhouse. Some of the world’s most-prominent brands look to Coyne PR to create high-profile public relations programs that deliver significant results and help them achieve their marketing communication and business goals.

Coyne PR’s Beauty, Fashion & Retail team represents clients across accessory and prestige sectors, with accounts including Mary Kay, Palmer’s and David’s Bridal. The team knows that the measure of success is based on the ability to impeccably groom the client’s image. From product launches and special events to social media campaigns, the Beauty, Fashion & Retail team thinks bigger and accelerates buzz for its clients, always keeping a finger on the pulse of this fast-paced industry.

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Carla Blizzard, Senior Vice President

Film Fashion, an exclusive division of Rogers & Cowan, specializes in matching fashion and accessory brands with prominent celebrities to provide elevated brand awareness. This specialty PR firm creates customized solutions to match clients and their latest fashions with the “right” celebrities and trendsetters that embody their brand and promote the desired image.

The firm leverages these Hollywood associations into media coverage through the execution of strategic media relations campaigns targeting key fashion, lifestyle, and entertainment press. Media activities for their roster of fashion designers, fine jewelers, luxury goods, and specialty retailers may include designer profiles, collection launches, and fashion shows. Film Fashion’s unique showroom space provides an optimal location to introduce media, stylists and celebrities to our client’s brands by housing an edited collection of samples.

Recent projects have included dressing celebrities for magazine photo shoots and red carpet appearances, securing editorial placements and coordinating product placement working with talent such as Angelina Jolie, Kate Winslet, Jennifer Lopez, Taylor Swift, Blake Lively, Kate Hudson, Carrie Underwood, Beyonce, and Katy Perry.

Clients include A Pea in the Pod, Catherine Malandrino, Chopard, David Meister, Georges Chakra, Houghton, Izmaylova, Jenny Packham, John Hardy, Nicole Miller, Pedro Garcia, Romona Keveza, Swarovski, Tadashi Shoji and Zuhair Murad.

FINN PARTNERS

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Connectivity and innovation are what drive Finn Partners’ fashion and beauty practice. The firm specializes in a collaborative approach that forges effective partnerships between fashion and beauty brands and tastemakers in the arts, music, film, media, and civic arenas. In this manner, brands are strongly positioned to capture consumer interest and the ensuing campaigns generate media coverage in traditional and unexpected places. Over the years, Finn Partners has represented both iconic and emerging brands by elevating their respective profiles through special events, media partnerships, sponsorships, digital strategies and even CSR. Clients have included American couturier and ready-to-wear designer B Michael, The North Face, Amore Pacific’s Sulwhasoo and the Prada Epicenter in New York’s Soho. Celebrity and influencer connections ranging from Grammy-winning recording artist Mary J. Blige to philanthropist Denise Rich have helped establish Finn Partners’ particular expertise in launching new brands and reinvigorating more established brands seeking to enhance market share and recognition in an increasingly competitive landscape.

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French/West/Vaughan (FWV) is the Southeast’s leading public relations, public affairs and brand communications agency, independent or otherwise. Founded in April 1997 by Agency Chairman & CEO Rick French, FWV now employs 85 research, public relations, public affairs, advertising and digital marketing experts among its Raleigh, N.C. head-
Through an insight-driven campaign, Hunter PR helped position ZYRTEC® as the allergy brand that understands the impact of allergy symptoms on a woman’s appearance. Helping the target consumer feel and look great despite allergies, the makers of ZYRTEC® created the first-ever ALLERGY FACE™ Beauty Counter at a place where allergies and beauty intersect — the Macy’s Flower Show. Providing beauty tips and makeovers to media and consumers, ZYRTEC® helped allergy sufferers tackle beauty challenges like watery eyes and a red nose during the spring allergy season.

Hunter Public Relations is a certified woman owned, top-ranked marketing communications firm specializing in consumer and lifestyle public relations. Rh viral appeal and high-impact strategic alliances — always within the context of a fully integrated marketing strategy.

We are known for big ideas and flawless execution. We are especially focused on luxury products. We understand the challenges of promoting intent-to-purchase among high net worth individuals. As long-term publicists for the annual American Express Publishing-Harrison Group Survey of Affluence & Wealth in America, we are privy to the most up-to-date intelligence on what drives the behavior of the well-to-do. If you want to expand your brand’s connections to the affluent or the aspirational, start by visiting our website (www.jgordonassociates.com).

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Established in 1993 by Janine Gordon, founder and CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi Public Relations, JGA is a consumer lifestyle New York City-based PR boutique with lots of sophistication, know-how and energy. Chairman Alvin Schechter, formerly CEO of Interbrand, brings world-class branding skills to JGA clients.

Our work for clients like Kiehl’s Since 1851, Bare Escentuals, Make Up For Ever and CARGO Cosmetics has helped build those brands and expand their engagement with target audiences. We are expert in the full range of digital and traditional communications tools. Our goal is to deliver shrewd brand strategy, high profile media coverage, A-list events, compelling celebrity endorsements, social media content with viral appeal and high-impact strategic alliances.

We are known for big ideas and flawless execution. We are especially focused on luxury products. We understand the challenges of promoting intent-to-purchase among high net worth individuals. As long-term publicists for the annual American Express Publishing-Harrison Group Survey of Affluence & Wealth in America, we are privy to the most up-to-date intelligence on what drives the behavior of the well-to-do. If you want to expand your brand’s connections to the affluent or the aspirational, start by visiting our website (www.jgordonassociates.com).
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Liz Kaplow, President and CEO

Kaplow is an independent, award-winning public relations firm that helps best-in-class companies tell their stories and change conversations.

For more than two decades, the firm has cultivated brand identities and reputations that nurture happy, loyal consumers. Kaplow’s holistic communications programs leverage the best of traditional media relations and digital/social campaigns to ensure that our clients’ brands are front and center with their target consumers and the influencers who matter the most.

This year, Kaplow added Conair Corporation and Kayser-Roth’s No nonsense brand to its diverse portfolio of consumer lifestyle, fashion and beauty, and retail brands. Kaplow also helped existing client Gurwitch (Laura Mercier and RêVive) launch a new global beauty brand, Nyakio. Other beauty and fashion clients include Avon mark & Avon Foundation, Unilever (Nexxus & St. Ives), Shiseido, CVS/pharmacy Beauty, Timex and CEW.

With its world class media relations team, and in-house social media content, creation and video production divisions, Kaplow exists for a singular reason: to create emotional connections between brand and consumer.

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At Marketing Maven, we believe beauty is in the eye of the consumer. As a results-driven integrated marketing and communications firm specializing in creating national media exposure for clients, we create strong relationships with celebrities and nationally recognized make-up artists and stylists to earn editorial coverage. We pride ourselves on our sales-focused and engagement-driven tactics that have proven to increase revenue and develop customer loyalty for our beauty and fashion clients.

Our clients value the social activation and media outreach strategies we implement alongside branded marketing collateral and coordination at red-carpet events, which set our clients apart as industry trend-setters. Marketing Maven also maintains close ties with fashion, beauty and lifestyle editors at major publications and television producers on a national level.

With expertise in creating innovative communications solutions, we represent a wide array of clients in the beauty and fashion industry including major fashion competitions, pageants, luxury beauty products from hair care to skin care, and designer brand clothing.

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M Booth is a global communications agency that shapes opinion, enhances reputation and drives business results for some of the most iconic beauty, personal care and fashion brands. Our expertise includes brand building campaigns, strategic partnerships, new product launches, influencer outreach, fashion show and event production, asset creation, digital and social media management and ongoing media relations. Some examples to contemporize the Vaseline brand, we created limited-edition bejeweled lip therapy minis that became the must-have holiday beauty item. For Lands’ End Canvas, we turned the concept of a pop-up shop on its head and partnered with influential bloggers to create the first-ever “blog-up shop” series generating an increase in new customer traffic. As AOR for JCPenney for six years, we generated 24 billion media impressions, including 200 national broadcast placements in one year alone, helping enhance perceptions of the brand as a fashion-forward retailer. Other brands the agency has represented include Aerosoles, Maidenform, BHLDN, Red Door Spas, and Alberto Culver.

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Pierce Mattie Communications remains the industry leader in public relations for beauty, fashion and lifestyle consumer brands. It is the only PR agency with a modular event space for the press located in Times Square that features a fashion showroom, spa/treatment room, multimedia capabilities and lounge. At Pierce Mattie Communications our team is innovative, client-focused and has solid relationships in the editorial world of New York. Pierce Mattie Communications has a proven track record of collaborating with its client partners to deliver consistent outstanding results.

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Valerie Zucker, Senior Vice President (Miami)

Rogers & Cowan treats each one of its Fashion and Beauty brands as a celebrity — because every brand has a distinct personality that sets it apart. With many of the top brands in Fashion and Beauty under our banner, we were among the very first PR agencies to leverage the explosive marketing power of fashion and celebrity.

The agency is located in New York, Los Angeles and Miami, some of the largest fashion capitals in the world. We offer extensive expertise in the fashion, beauty and media relations, including brand building campaigns, strategic partnerships, new product launches, influencer outreach, fashion show and event production, asset creation, digital and social media management and ongoing media relations. Some examples — to contemporize the Vaseline brand, we created limited-edition bejeweled lip therapy minis that became the must-have holiday beauty item. For Lands’ End Canvas, we turned the concept of a pop-up shop on its head and partnered with influential bloggers to create the first-ever “blog-up shop” series generating an increase in new customer traffic. As AOR for JCPenney for six years, we generated 24 billion media impressions, including 200 national broadcast placements in one year alone, helping enhance perceptions of the brand as a fashion-forward retailer. Other brands the agency has represented include Aerosoles, Maidenform, BHLDN, Red Door Spas, and Alberto Culver.

Continued on page 22
RUDER FINN INC.

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Kathy Bloomgarden, CEO
Rachel Spielman, Global Head of Corporate Communications
Jean-Michel Dumont, Chairman, Ruder Finn Asia
Elian Shou, Managing Director China & Senior VP, Ruder Finn Asia

ROGERS & COWAN

Continued from page 21

As one of the largest independent global communications agencies, Ruder Finn is dual-headquartered in New York and Beijing with on-the-ground presence in Boston, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., London, Brussels, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Singapore, Bangalore, Mumbai, and New Delhi. Our deep understanding of the global market — including the U.S., Europe, and China — gives us a strong perspective on fashion, style, luxury and changing consumer perspectives. We are uniquely positioned to provide clients with global perspective, insights and resources, yet small enough to bring the exceptional client service and creative edge of a boutique agency.

Ruder Finn works with the world’s leading luxury brands in fashion, lifestyle and beauty to build corporate reputation and enhance brand awareness and visibility through integrated communications programs in markets across the globe.

As one of the largest independent global communications agencies, Rogers & Cowan has the specialized unit focused on matching fashion and accessory brands with prominent celebrity clients, cultural institutions and leading beauty and fashion influencers.

To support their key stakeholder audiences, Rogers & Cowan leverages its relationship-built network of top beauty and fashion influencers, including social media mavens, magazine directors, TV producers, top bloggers, celebrity stylists, make-up artists and Hollywood A-listers. These relationships are paramount in producing award-winning results for clients. From magazine pages and national broadcast to the most influential blogs and web sites, Weber Shandwick executes memorable beauty and fashion campaigns that garner attention and incite action by the brand’s key stakeholders.

ZING USA

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Zing represents beauty and fashion clients in the U.S., U.K. and Australia, building their brands by consistently winning editorial exposure for their apparel, swimwear, cosmetics, and body products in the world’s leading beauty, fashion, lifestyle and entertainment publications.

In 2012, Zing was honored with an American Business Award honor in the “Best New Product Launch Event” for the introduction of Katy Perry Lashes by Eylure, a well-orchestrated appearance by the pop star before hundreds of her fans who were able to try on the new lashes at a nearby ‘pop-up’ salon.

With offices in New York City and Los Angeles, two of the world’s leading beauty and fashion capitals, we are well positioned to help lifestyle companies engage their key stakeholder audiences.

Our core competencies include print, broadcast and online media relations, celebrity spokesperson campaigns, boutique distribution, event management (many during Fashion Week) experiential marketing, product launches and promotions, social media optimization, and crisis/issue management. Current and recent clients include Church & Dwight (Batiste), Original Additions (Eylure, Elegant Touch), Seafoxy, Mi Ola, Hips & Curves, W3LL People, WISH, Pure Fiji, Revision Skincare, Jan Marini Skin Research, Hills, Tara Smith and Isoki.
# O’Dwyer’s Rankings
## Top Beauty & Fashion PR Firms

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<tr>
<th>Firm</th>
<th>Net Fees (2012)</th>
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<td>1. Edelman</td>
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<td>11. Linhart PR</td>
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<td>12. Allison+Partners</td>
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<td>14. Beehive PR</td>
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<td>15. Hunter PR</td>
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<td>16. Hirons &amp; Company</td>
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<td>17. Rosica Communications</td>
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<td>24. Marketing Maven</td>
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<td>25. Schneider Associates</td>
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<td>Boston</td>
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Perfecting the perfect pitch

By Fraser Seitel

Whether you think the practice of PR is dead, dying or just plain dormant, even you have got to agree that attracting client publicity is still what PR people get paid for.

And if you — like me — believe in getting paid for what you do, then you need to know how one goes about attracting “publicity.”

The answer, of course, lies in the most traditional of PR skills, pitching; that is, interesting a third-party reporter in what your client is selling.

Think about it: even semi-conscious consumers will distrust your own Facebook musings or Twitter postings almost as much as they’re dubious of your advertising. It’s just common sense that people will be more skeptical of communication you pay for than they will communication over which you have no control.

So knowing the “do’s” and “don’t’s” of pitching the media — including bloggers and other denizens of the web — is obligatory for public relations knowledge. So here they are:

First, the Don’ts.

• Don’t bore
Reporters/editors/bloggers receive scores of pitches every day. Most are mind-numbingly tedious. Those get trashed in a nanosecond. So, you need to make yours stand out in scintillating fashion.

• Don’t pitch the wrong pitch
The number one complaint that reporters have of PR people is, “He obviously has no idea what I cover.” So, a smart pitcher will know precisely who he or she is pitching to and what, specifically, they are most interested in reporting.

• Don’t hyperbolize
If your pitch sounds like it was written by Donald Trump, i.e. “the best, most exciting, most unique and revolutionary, cutting edge product in the history of mankind,” it will be deep-sixed faster than you can say, “comb over.” Reporters want facts, not hyperbole. Give it to them straight.

• Don’t be an annoying tweeter
Some PR pitchers use Twitter to let reporters know that “I just sent you an email” and “Any response to my email” and “Curious what you thought of my email” and, well, you get the point. Twitter isn’t there to abuse reporters. If they ain’t interested in what you’re pitching, move on.

• Don’t get a reputation as a “junk” pitch
No, we’re not talking about the “junk” that Anthony Weiner was pitching. We’re talking about pitching stories that have no earthly chance of getting used. Reporters are busy and will quickly grow tired of and remember one who bothers them with material they will never, ever use.

Now, the Do’s.

• Do research the target
In other words, know who you are pitching. Read what they write in the paper or report on the air or record in their blog. The more familiar you are with the target of your pitching, the more likely your pitch will resonate. So go to school on the reporter you’re after.

• Do personalize.
One positive mention in an objective, indifferent, third-party media source is worth a lot more than a paid ad or your own Facebook posting. So pitches shouldn’t be randomly distributed — although most are. Rather, they should be directed, personally, to one particular reporter and tailored to his or her interests.

• Do make it different
This is the converse of the Don’t about “boring.” Your pitch must stand out from the rest. Simply saying the product or service you’re pitching is “unique” won’t convince anyone. You must demonstrate that this time, it’s different.

• Do localize
Reporters report locally, so they prefer local news. If you’re pitching from out-of-town, you’ve got a built-in problem. But if you’re local and pitching a local product or service, you’re ahead of the game. Similarly, pitching a “timely” topic that is currently in the news is another positive pitch “Do.”

• Do use celebrities
Does anybody really care if Kim Kardashian or Ryan Seacrest or Beyoncé is involved with your product? Sadly, yes.

Celebrities, like it or not, sell. So if you can tie a celebrity to your pitch, do so.

• Do cite conflict
What also sells is “conflict.” Good journalism, good reporting, good story-telling are all about disagreement, controversy, conflict. Reporters abhor, “win/win” pitches. But they adore pitches that highlight the other side of an existing squabble; the more conflictful, the better.

• Do persist
In PR pitching, the bulldog gets the meat. A pitcher who gives up at an unanswered email isn’t much of a pitcher. In pitching, persistence pays.

A good pitcher will call back a reporter, looking for an up or down answer. More often than not, a reasonable reporter confronted by a reasonable pitch will be courteous enough to respond one way or the other to a proper yet persistent pitcher.

• Do answer the two critical Q’s
Finally, a good pitcher won’t pitch at all unless he or she has satisfactorily answered the two critical questions:

1. Who cares?
2. What’s new?

If the answers to these questions are “no” and “nothing,” a good pitcher, concerned about building a trusting relationship with a journalist, will wait for another day.
Managing for prosperity in 2014 and beyond (part two)

By Richard Goldstein

Part one of this column was an introduction to prosperity planning. Part two discusses some specific areas that must be addressed. The number one item on your list is to reach a target profitability of 25% or more. If you are at the 25% mark, make your target 35%.

Planning and budgeting is key. You must set goals and have a vision of where you want to end up.

Tony Robbins once said it is crucial to write down your goals. He said if you don’t know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?

How to guarantee low profitability

Low profitability is a direct result of not managing your engagements properly or knowing how to price an engagement. Either of these can result in always operating in crisis mode (I believe crisis mode tops lack of knowledge).

Fear of losing a client is next. Fear leads to over servicing in my view. If it is not fear, please write back to me and let me know why you over service at your agency. If enough of you do this, I will publish the results.

Think about the last time you hired a contractor to work on your home. You came to a price and the contractor started work. An unforeseen event arose that required the contractor to make a change or do the job differently or you wanted a plan modification. Did the contractor over service you? Or did you learn the two words “Change Order”?

I find smaller (less than $2.0 million) agencies generally have lower profitability for the reasons mentioned above. When I meet an agency that seems to have profitability issues, I look at three basics factors (similar to a doctor performing a basic examination).

The first test is the revenue per professional test. I generally multiply the total full time professionals by $200,000. I would expect to see a $2.0 million agency have ten professionals. You can use $175,000 if you like. We are still playing in the same ball park (See my prior column on this subject).

The next test is to divide revenue by billable hours. Smaller agencies are hard pressed to tell me how many billable hours are generated. I usually use on average 1,500 hours per professional or some other number that agency management feels is appropriate.

In the example just mentioned, I would like to see an average billing rate of $185. If this is the case, the revenue for the agency should be $2.7 million not $2.0. The problem comes into play when the number is $85 per hour. I will tell you all, this result is not uncommon.

Labor costs is next on the list. According to the SGP best practices report, this percentage should be in the 55% range on average or lower.

It has been my experience that agencies with cash flow and profitability issues benchmark at 70% to 80%. Again, according to the SGP benchmarking report, operating expenses and overhead average about 26%. Therefore, if labor is 70% and operating costs are 26%, the result is poor profitability, and stress. Again, the culprits can usually be traced back to poor account management and/or over servicing.

The Al Croft keys to profitability

As many of you know, we recently lost one of the best PR agency consultants and the publisher of Management Strategies for Public Relations Firms, Al Croft. A real loss to the PR profession!

Some of his “keys” are:

Positioning. Assuming you have or will develop a business plan, consider developing a marketing niche or strategic position for your agency. Describe what your agency is; what you want to be; the kind of clients you want; and what markets you currently serve and those that offer opportunities.

Analyze current capabilities and those you will need to move into new markets. Delineate strengths and corporate culture, the things that make your agency unique and memorable. Explore steps you can take to ensure that clients and prospects perceive your agency is in step with reality. Sounds like some Tony Robbins advice?

Productivity. A problem often experienced by small and mid-sized firms is low productivity (see above). This is usually a result of a lower than 85% staff utilization. High productivity (not over servicing) depends on attracting and maintaining excellent staff that have high values and morals, and an environment that motivates staff by building intellectual capital.

Money alone will not do it. Cash is the goal at the end of the day. However, you cannot get it without great staff. Staff is one of your most important, if not the most important, assets you have. If you cannot build your staff’s intellectual capital, they will move on! Your employees need to be recognized for success and should be proud. They need to develop a strong sense of their own self-worth.

It is agency management’s responsibility to educate employees about the agency’s work load and to train them to balance and manage their own productivity by getting help in handling peak loads or asking for additional work when their own load is about to drop off.

A high level of staff interdependence is essential to overall high productivity. Allow staff members that are not busy to work on other projects. In this case, do not worry about the hours they will spend. The projects may be completed ahead of schedule which is great for client expectations.

You may just increase staff intellectual capital by doing this that has the potential to increase your bottom line.

PR Services Briefs

WEBER SHANDWICK SHOPS AT KOLH’S

Kohl’s, the “value-oriented” department store chain, has selected Weber Shandwick to handle its PR following a review.

Cramer-Krasselt and BWR have worked for projects for the Memomonee Falls, Wis.-based chain of more than 1,100 units.

Weber’s sister agency, McCann-Erickson, does advertising for Kohl’s.

Kohl’s reported flat first-quarter revenues of $4.2 billion. It blamed a slump in sales in "wealthier, more stylish” markets among reasons for the performance. Net was off four percent to $147 million.

CEO Kevin Mansell will report second-quarter financial results next week. Revenues are expected to grow from one to three percent.
Five PR lessons from Weiner’s imploding campaign

By Bill Huey

As the Anthony Weiner campaign trudges along — leaking vital fluids like a soldier in Napoleon’s army at the Russian front — some important lessons (and eternal verities) are emerging. They don’t all have to do with communication, but certainly have a lot to do with effective PR. Here are five lessons we can learn from the Weiner campaign thus far.

Fix yourself first. Whether it’s narcissism, addiction, sexual compulsion, or simply an unlikable trait that can be corrected, fix it before presenting yourself as a candidate. We’re all human, but the higher the office, the greater the scrutiny. That’s why Eliot Spitzer chose to run for Comptroller of New York City, an obscure but important office that will put him back on the path to public service and political rehabilitation.

Don’t use surrogates. You are the candidate. Not your wife, your campaign advisor, or your media consultant. Stand up there and show you can take the flak. Being mayor of the most important city in the world is no walk in the park, and if you should win, people aren’t going to want to hear from your aides. They want YOU.

Don’t whine about media coverage (an eternal verity). Weiner was on TV August 13 whining about how the media only want to cover negative stuff. Be thankful you have any coverage at all, instead of just stand-ups and B-roll. And for God’s sake, don’t start in about “style over substance,” especially when you don’t have much substance yourself.

Be humble (eternal verity deux). When you’ve been slapped down but given another chance to show you’ve changed, be humble. Show you can control your emotions and listen to people without calling them names like “grandpa” or making fun of their foreign accents. After all, New York is a city of immigrants, and you’re not exactly descended from Peter Stuyvesant.

Offer a plan, not just yourself. When you are obviously a flawed character, you need to make the campaign about issues that matter, not just about you. Yes, the media want to ignore that, but if you keep talking about issues they will have no choice except to listen and report.

What can you do to make things better, or simply continue them as they are? What is being overlooked? Hunger, vaccinations, hurricane victims, storm preparedness in general? There must be a least a dozen issues from which to choose. Pick three and stay with them until the bitter end.

Nothing can save Anthony Weiner’s campaign, but if you are ever advising someone trying to make a comeback, it might serve you well to remember these lessons.

Reasons why Sony is beating Microsoft in PR

By Ronn Torossian

Every few years, the world of technology gets rocked by the release of new home video gaming consoles. Though the technology that supports these games improves every year, new consoles, such as the PlayStation, Nintendo, and Xbox systems, are expected to take major leaps forward with a new version, meaning that a good amount of time passes between releases.

The industry has become reactive to itself, meaning that, since most of the technology being used is widely available, all the gaming console companies tend to release their new products in the same year.

This is true in 2013, when we will all see the release of the PlayStation 4 and the Xbox One, both of which have been teased and talked about for over a year. Though the releases will be closer to the Christmas holiday season, large conferences and conventions that serve as staging areas for gaming companies have shown us most of what we can expect from the new system, and as far as the media and most fans are concerned, Xbox has been getting destroyed in the public relations war between Microsoft and Sony.

Microsoft’s public overreach

In a very public display at the Xbox One’s initial reveal in May 2013, without knowing what their competition was planning, Microsoft rolled out a slew of new features for the Xbox, including the fact the audio and visual input for the Xbox Kinect would always be on, and the system would, once per day, have to connect to Xbox live and verify the licensing of all games.

This angered many fans, raising fears that it would do away with used games, and that their console would be spying on them 24/7. Unable to respond adequately to simple questions, Microsoft was buried under the bad press.

Sony’s solution? Highlight all the ways their system would not do any of the questionable things (most of which have been removed from the Xbox One) that fans and critics hated about their competitor’s system.

Slow reaction

Microsoft was slow to react to the clamor of their fans and critics, and as such, both were unable to answer concerns and unable to roll back unpopular ideas in a timely fashion. This resulted in Sony getting the media edge and using it to bludgeon Microsoft at every press opportunity.

Overpricing

Knowing that interest in their console was already waning, Microsoft still proceeded with announcing an exorbitant price for their console without knowing that Sony would be charging $100 less. An attempt at spinning the price difference as paying more for greater value failed, since both products had already been demonstrated, and the differences were not apparent to the public.

Unless a major PR shift happens soon, the holiday season will be much merrier for Sony than for Microsoft.
Ruder Finn veteran Smirnoff to WS

Susan Smirnoff, the healthcare pro and Ruder Finn veteran since 1979, has joined Weber Shandwick as Executive VP/Senior Counsel.

In her career, Smirnoff promoted disease awareness, business alliances, clinical treatment recruitment and Rx to OTC switches.

She co-led RFs U.S. healthcare and served as Senior Counselor to health and corporate teams.

Smirnoff is President and Trustee at CancerCare, which supports people with cancer.

Laura Schoen, President of Global Healthcare at WS, said Smirnoff’s “passion for science and her commitment to delivering programs that impact patient outcomes is a perfect match to our culture.”

California Gov Press Secretary joins Fenton

Gil Duran, who was Press Secretary for California Governor Jerry Brown, has joined Fenton Communications’ San Francisco office as Senior VP-Media.

The former San Jose Mercury News reporter worked with Brown in Sacramento since 2011 and in Oakland from 2003-07 when the Governor was Mayor.

Duran also worked for top Golden State politicos, serving as Communications Director for Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Press Secretary for former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Senior Advisor/Communications Director to Attorney General Kamala Harris, a rising star in the Democratic party.

At Fenton, Duran will handle public interest work for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Open Society Institute, Blue Shield of California Foundation, California Endowment and California Wellness Foundation.

Edelman’s Fiddelke moves to SC Johnson

Deb Fiddelke, Executive VP and Edelman’s PA practice head in Chicago, is moving to SC Johnson & Son next month to head up Communications and PA duties.

The Racine, Wis.-headquartered consumer products company owns brands such as Windex, Glade, Pledge, Ziploc, Off! and Scrubbing Bubbles.

It generated sales of more than $9 billion during the past year.

Fiddelke joined Edelman in 2010.

Earlier, she was Senior Manager, International & Governmental Affairs for Chicago 2016 Olympics Bid Committee; deputy/Special Assistant for Legislative Affairs in the George Bush II White House, congressional affairs liaison at the White House Council on Environmental Quality and Senior Policy Advisor to former Nebraska Republican Senator Chuck Hagel, who currently holds the Secretary of Defense position.

Rasky, Ogilvy alum moves to Twitter

Ned Wexler, who was VP-Public Affairs in the Washington office of Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications, has joined Twitter.

He will handle public policy and political affairs at the micro-blogging site.

At Rasky since March, Wexler handled Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Mediacom Communications and American Student Assistance.

He joined the shop after being Communications Director for Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT).

Wexler also did a stint as Account Director at Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, working on non-profit, corporate and government accounts, and was Communications Director at activist group Wal-Mart Watch.

R&C casts Zucker for southeast push

Rogers & Cowan has acquired Boca Raton-based boutique firm Zucker PR to push into south Florida and the southeastern U.S.

Valerie Zucker takes a Senior VP role with R&C, heading a regional push for the Los Angeles-based entertainment PR firm, which also has operations in New York and London.

She reports to R&C CEO Tom Tardio.

Zucker left real estate and luxury goods PR firm The Apple Organization in 2001 to set up her own shop, which works with clients like PRAI Beauty, Delray Marketplace, Mummies of the World, Rick Case Automotive Group, and American Dog Rescue on celebrity and events PR assignments.

She previously led PR for The Sports Authority as the Florida-based retailer grew from a few dozen stores in the 1990s.

R&C is owned by Interpublic.

AbMac’s Franklin to FTI in San Francisco

John Franklin, Managing Director for Abernathy MacGregor Group in San Francisco, has moved to FTI Consulting’s strategic communications unit to focus on the telecom, media and technology sectors.

Franklin, who specialized in integrating PR, marketing and digital strategies at AMG, handled HP, PepsiCo, Credit Suisse and Toyota.

He earlier spent eight years at Robinson Lerer & Montgomery, now RLM Finsbury, on crisis assignments for Northwest Airlines, Morgan Stanley and Becton-Dickinson.

Franklin remains in San Francisco for FTI.
Protesters target Bell Pottinger HQ over fracking

Protesters from the anti-fracking group No Dash for Gas blocked access to the London headquarters of Bell Pottinger Aug. 19 and hung a banner from the building as part of a campaign against the firm and U.K. energy client Cuadrilla.

The group, which said its protesters super-glued themselves to the PR firm’s glass door and used arm tubes to block access at around 8 a.m., also played over a sound system a recording of what they said was a Bell Pottinger staffer admitting its PR offensive on fracking “sounds like utter f---ing b-llsh-t.” A banner unfurled on the building read “Bell Pottinger Fracking Liars.”

“This morning we’re stopping their staff reaching their desks in the hope that for one day at least Bell Pottinger won’t be able to mislead the British public about fracking,” said protester Kerry Fenton. “In truth it’s polluting, expensive and dangerous.”

Bell Pottinger acknowledged the protest but said its offices remained open and that police were dealing with the activists.

The firm said the group was only playing part of the recording, which was originally released by Greenpeace in May.

Protesters also made their way to offices and a drilling site of Cuadrilla, which has begun exploratory drilling in West Sussex, U.K.

The actions came on the second day of a six-day campaign against fracking.

Earlier in Aug., Bahraini activists threatened PR firms working on behalf of that country’s regime, a group that has included Bell Pottinger, Hill+Knowlton Strategies and Qorvis Communications, among others.

A U.K. environmental group targeted the headquarters of Edelman in 2009 with a “naked protest” over the firm’s work for coal power company EON.

Weber Shandwick checks in with DC exchange

Washington, D.C.’s health insurance exchange has awarded its communications account to Weber Shandwick after a competitive pitch process.

The D.C. Health Benefit Exchange Authority, which hopes to serve as a model for state-run exchanges around the country under the Affordable Care Act, issued an RFP in June to plan and execute its integrated communications and marketing effort ahead of the Oct. 1 deadline to start enrollment.

Eight firms pitched for the account, said Richard Sorian, director of communications for the exchange and former assistant secretary for public affairs for the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services during President Obama’s first term. He declined to provide a budget for the work.

Sorian was a Chief Advisor to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, a key figure promoting the ACA.

Seventeen firms attended a pre-proposal conference in early June, including PR shops GolinHarris, Hager Sharp, MSLGroup, Vanguard Communications, Barrington Associates, New Partners, and Campbell and Company, among others.

The Washington exchange is the latest in a series of PR assignments for Weber Shandwick under the Affordable Care Act. The Interpublic-owned firm has worked with California, Maryland, Massachusetts and the federal government on insurance exchange-related assignments.

Cassidy fronts Iraqi opposition

Interpublic’s Cassidy & Associates has inked a $120,000, one-year pact to represent Iraq’s Tajdeed Party, which is the political organization of the country’s exiled former vice president, Tariq Al-Hashimi.

Tajdeed claims to be the voice of Iraq’s minority Sunni sect. Al-Hashimi was charged in Dec. 2011 with running hit squads to conduct terror attacks against officials in the Shiite-controlled government.

Iraq’s Kurdistan region, which is Sunni majority, refused to turn over Al-Hashimi, who has denied all charges, to the central government in Baghdad. He then traveled to Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, which granted him residency.

According to Cassidy’s contract, the firm is to educate U.S. policymakers about the Tajdeed party’s priority issues and long-term goals “on a limited but reasonable basis.”

NRAEF places order for Kramer

Steven Kramer, who was Senior VP at the National Association of Home Builders’ Home Builders Institute arm, has moved to the National Restaurant Association’s Educational Foundation, for the VP-Communications Slot.

The NRAEF offers scholarships and runs program to develop talent at the high school level on up for careers in the restaurant/foodservice business, which has more than 13M people working at about 1M establishments.

Rob Gifford, Executive VP-Philanthropic Initiatives for NRAEF, said communications plays a vital role in supporting the organization’s mission.

He believes Kramer will be “a strong leader who can drive our messaging and awareness to new heights and help us reach new milestones.”

Kramer has Big Agency experience gained via stints at Weber Shandwick, Hill+Knowlton Strategies, Ketchum and Burson-Marsteller.

At the Builders’ group, he handled programming that received more than $13 million in funding.
Bahrain PR firms put on notice

On the day the Egyptian military stormed the camps of supporters of ousted President Mohamed Morsi and slaughtered 150 people (or 2,200, according to the Muslim Brotherhood), Bahrain activists put western PR firms supporting the King’s government on notice, threatening cyber-attacks on their websites.

In Bahrain in August, police fired teargas and birdshot to break up demonstrators at 60 rallies agitating for democratic reform in the kingdom.

As part of the Tammarrod (Rebellion) Bahrain umbrella coalition, Anonymous Operation Bahrain said “various websites of the regime and also of anyone who supports the regime” will face cyber-attacks. “This may include western PR firms who are paid to white wash the crimes of the dictator in Manama,” said AOB in a press release. “Our action will continue for however long the Tammarrod Bahrain movement sustains the protests in the streets.”

Bahrain Watch has published a list of PR firms that have represented the government since the protests began in February 2011 and were ultimately put down by the Saudi Arabian military. Those firms are Bell Pottinger, BGR Group, Big Tent Communications, Dragon Associates, G3, Gardant Communications, Hill+Knowlton Strategies, Joe Trippi & Associates., M&C Saatchi, New Century Dragon Associates, G3, Gardant Communications, Sanitas International and Sorini, Samet & Associates.

Nigeria takes McBee for media

Nigeria, a major oil supplier to the U.S., has hired Washington, D.C.-based McBee Strategic Consulting to increase its media profile here.

Africa’s most populous country, Nigeria in August claimed a major victory in the long-running war with its Islamic insurgency, reporting the death of the leader of the Boko Haram group.

Abubakar Shekau is said to have died after being mortally wounded during a shoot-out with Nigeria’s military. The U.S. had a $7 million bounty on Shekau’s head. Half of Nigeria’s 160 million people are Muslims.

On behalf of Nigeria’s Washington embassy, McBee is to generate the media messaging narrative, develop thought leadership opportunities, hike social media engagement and monitor the media to educate and inform U.S. and non-governmental organizations about its policies.

McBee’s Eric Bovim, who merged his Gibraltar Associates with McBee last year, handles the work with John Procter, a Gibraltar/DCI Group/Coalition Provisional Authority spokesperson veteran and Christine Bald, a former member of the State Dept.’s Iraq political desk.

Nigeria last year hired WPP’s Glover Park Group to a $30,000 a-month contract.

Omnicom’s Mercury Public Affairs unit scooped up a four-month $300,000 assignment in July.

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.

Coyne Public Relations, LLC, New York, NY, registered August 7, 2013 for Hong Kong Tourism Board, North Point, Hong Kong, to execute a comprehensive PR program which includes press trips, press releases, pitches, promotional newsletters, and social media outreach to targeted American lifestyle media.


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.

Bockorny Group Inc., Washington, D.C., registered August 7, 2013 for 21st Century Fox, Washington, D.C., for issues relating to retransmission consent; broadcast spectrum reclamation and incentive auctions; content regulation; combating online infringement and online piracy.

Shockey Scofield Solutions, LLC, Alexandria, VA registered August 19, 2013 for Safeway, Inc., Atlanta, GA, regarding funding for the NFA branch of the ATF.


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

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Editorial Calendar:
January, PR Buyer’s Guide/Crisis Comms.
February, Environmental PR & Public Affairs
March, Food & Beverage
April, Broadcast Media Services
May, PR Firm Rankings
June, Multicultural/Diversity
July, Travel & Tourism
August, Prof. Svcs. & Financial/Investor Relns.
September, Beauty & Fashion
October, Healthcare & Medical
November, Technology
December, Sports & Entertainment

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