



Jack O'Dwyer,  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016  
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750  
[www.odwyerpr.com](http://www.odwyerpr.com); [jobs.odwyerpr.com](http://jobs.odwyerpr.com)

May 7, 2012 Vol. 45 No. 19

## MEDICARE PLANS E-HEALTH RECORDS PUSH

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is planning a closed RFP among its pre-selected group of PR firms to create a campaign touting electronic health records and other forms of health information technology, as well as incentives for healthcare providers.

The PR effort is called for under the Health Information



Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act, part of the 2009 stimulus.

Five agencies are pre-qualified to pitch the fed entity's assignments – Fleishman-Hillard, Ketchum, Ogilvy PR, Porter Novelli and Weber Shandwick – following a review last year.

Ketchum has handled multimillion-dollar PR efforts for the federal entity covering electronic health records. It currently has a pact running through August.

The campaign expected to be out for bids will be primarily aimed to educate healthcare providers eligible for incentives, with a secondary component targeting Medicare and Medicaid consumers about digital health records and how they lower costs and increase quality of care.

The federal agency, known as CMS, runs programs affecting 102M Americans and is being expanded and revamped under the Obama administration's healthcare overhaul.

## DOWLING HEADS EAST OPERATIONS FOR F-H

Robert Dowling, president of Weber Shandwick's New York operation, has shifted to Fleishman-Hillard to lead the eastern region – New York and Boston – as GM and senior partner in the Big Apple.

F-H/America's president Jack Modzelewski said the east is having an "outstanding year" so far.

He wants Dowling "to take us to the next level of reputation and successful performance."

The firm has also promoted senior VP and senior partner Ron Guirguis as deputy GM for New York, where he leads the corporate and public affairs group.

Dowling exits Weber Shandwick after seven years, during which he led its Silicon Valley operation and North American tech practice, as well as New York.

He was previously an executive VP for Ruder Finn and VP for Peppercom and Progressive Strategies.



Dowling

## RED INK GROWS AT MDC PARTNERS

MDC Partners reported a \$24.9M first-quarter loss, up from \$7.1M last year, as revenues jumped 9.7 percent to \$236M.

CEO Miles Nadal called the performance "solid" and believes the parent of Allison+Partners, Kwittken + Co. and Sloane & Co. is "positioned nicely" to deliver its annual financial projections.



Nadal

The company collected \$50M in new business wins, which is a gain from the \$8.2M picked up a year ago. Organic growth rose 5.4 percent.

Nadal said MDC is focused on profitable organic growth, improving margins/cash flows and de-leveraging its balance sheet. The company had \$370M in long-term debt vs. \$36M in cash on March 31. It faces a "substantial amount of acquisition consideration due coming this year and next," according to CFO David Doft.

MDC stock trades at \$9.79. The 52-week range is \$9.40 and \$20.99.

## BERMUDA REVIEWS TOURISM PR

Bermuda is reviewing its North American PR account with an open RFP process through May.

Lou Hammond & Associates is the incumbent. The firm won the last review in 2010, regaining the account it handled from 1999-2007 after Corbin & Associates won the business.

Publicasity, London, handles U.K. and Ireland PR for the British colony.

The RFP covers tourism PR for the U.S. and Canada, including business, travel trade and leisure travel. Eighty percent of its travelers come from the U.S.

View the RFP notice: <http://odwpr.us/ITHxgl>.

## OHIO LOOKS FOR TOURISM PITCHES

Ohio kicked off an open review April 26 for its tourism PR account with an RFP process.

The state wants a "creative, results-driven, forward thinking agency partner to take its public relations/media relations efforts to new heights for the 2013/2014 biennium," reads the RFP, noting current trends point toward value vacations close to home. Key markets are Pennsylvania, Kentucky, West Virginia, Indiana and Michigan.

Fahlgren Mortine PR is the five-year incumbent on a \$300K/year contract through June 30.

Deadline for pitches is May 18. RFP: <http://odwpr.us/Ij89bp>.

## **WASTE MGMT HIT WITH 'GREENWASH' PITCH**

Waste Management, which starred in the April 30 AMC cable TV debut of "The Pitch," is target of a guerrilla marketing effort launched by a Madison, Wis.-based sustainable waste policy consultant, who charges the nation's leading private sector trash collector is seeking to overturn composting measures.

The company is aware of the effort and considers it "misguided." A spokesperson said WM lobbied as a member of a broad coalition to amend, not kill, compost measures in Florida and Georgia.



It pushed for a "holistic approach" to the laws, fearing that the rules on the books would divert half of the compost to illegal dump sites.

Peter Anderson, president of Recycle Worlds Consulting, dismisses as "greenwashing" the claim of WM that is the country's leader in transforming waste into higher value products such as recycling and renewable energy.

Anderson said his video and the [www.rethinkgreenwashing.org](http://www.rethinkgreenwashing.org) site is tied as a "hook" to the publicity generated by the AMC reality show, featuring two ad agencies competing for the WM business.

The Houston-based firm, according to chief marketing officer Dave Aardsma, "participated in the show because it gives us the ability to teach people more about our brand than a traditional advertising campaign."

WM considers The Pitch a "great way to explain how we help our customers extract the most value from all the materials that we handle," according to its March 29 release. WM also worked with The Pitch producers on "Undercover Boss" and "Project Runway."

## **ETP GETS COUNSEL IN \$5.3B SUNOCO DEAL**

Dallas-based natural gas company Energy Transfer Partners and Sunoco are working with outside PR counsel on ETP's \$5.3B acquisition of Sunoco announced April 30.

The \$50.13 per share offer is a 29 percent premium on Sunoco's average share price over a 20-day period through last week and was approved by Sunoco's board.

ETP said the deal will expand its geographic footprint to the northeast and diversify its energy holdings with Philadelphia-based Sunoco's focus on crude oil. It includes Sunoco Inc., the retail company, and Sunoco Logistics Partners, its pipeline, terminal and crude production operation which will remain publicly traded as a master limited partnership.

Mark Palmer, a Brunswick Group partner based in the firm's Dallas/Fort Worth office, is handling media relations and counsel for ETP on the deal. Granada Communications Group of Dallas is also a PR advisor to ETP.

The deal is expected to close in the fourth quarter after shareholder and regulatory approval.

Tom Golembeski, manager of corporate comms. for Sunoco, is speaking for his company on the acquisition. He said Sunoco worked with Sard Verbinen & Co.

## **SANITAS PICKS UP IRAQI POLITICAL WORK**

Sanitas International has signed on with Iraq's Iraqiya List political party, which is the main opposition to the government of prime minister Nouri al-Maliki.

The firm, according to its engagement letter, is to provide IL strategic communications, digital media and stakeholder engagement duties in the U.S.

The goal is to highlight its "accomplishments, commitment and vision relating to the security, stability and freedom of the Iraqi people and to improve its reputation among key target audiences."

IL is a secular party headed by former prime minister Ayad Allawi.

Christopher Harvin, Sanitas co-founder, is a veteran of Levick Strategic Communications and former advance man for George W. Bush. He served on the PA team of ex-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and did a stint with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad.

In 2011, Sanitas began work for Bahrain's Information Affairs Authority under a subcontract inked with Democratic consultant Joe Trippi, who handled Howard Dean's presidential bid.

## **U.K.'s BLAIR HIRES PR HELP FOR COMEBACK**

Britain's former prime minister Tony Blair, who was derided as "Bush's poodle" during the invasion of Iraq, has hired a PR rep as part of an attempted political comeback.

The *Daily Mail* reports that Rachel Grant, communications director at the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, will guide Blair's return to the political arena. She is a former Downing Street and Whitehall press officer.

Grant, according to the Mail, will attempt to rebuild Blair's image in the U.K. "following adverse publicity over his money spinning ventures."

Since being forced from office in 2007 by former ally Gordon Brown, Blair has amassed a \$35M fortune through consulting fees (J.P. Morgan, Zurich Financial Services, LVMH and Kuwait), speeches and book sales.

Blair is to return to the public stage at a high-profile appearance with current Labour Party leader Ed Milliband during the London Olympics this summer.

## **COKE VET MOVES TO EDELMAN**

Lisa Manley, who was in charge of Coca-Cola's global corporate social responsibility and sustainability strategy, is joining Edelman May 15 in Chicago as executive VP of its recently launched business + social purpose practice headed by Carol Cone.

At the world's largest soft drink company, Manley dealt with issues such as health & wellness, water resources, climate protection, women's issues, packaging and sustainable agriculture.

Earlier, she was senior VP and group director at Widmeyer Communications in Washington, D.C., and held posts at Georgetown University and University of the South (Sewanee, Tenn.).

Manley will report to Kevin Cook, managing director of Edelman's Chicago office.



**Manley**

**DISCOVERY ACQUIRES REVISION 3**

Discovery Communications has acquired Revision 3, a San Francisco-based digital video firm that delivers content to sites such as CNET, iTunes, Google, AOL and TiVo. It claims more than 23M monthly viewers across 27 digital channels.

J.B. Perrette, chief digital officer at Discovery, said in a statement that the deal will allow enable the cable TV combine to cultivate “more original content and fresh personalities that resonate with passionate communities online and across all platforms, while enhancing our innovative marketing solutions for advertising partners.”

Revision was founded in 2005 by Kevin Rose (Digg, TechTV), Jay Adelson (Digg, Equinix) and David Prager (TechTV).

CEO Jim Louderback, former editor-in-chief at *PC Magazine*, assumed the helm in 2007.

**EBAY TARGETS BIG APPLE**

eBay plans to open a 35,000 sq. ft. technology center of excellence in Manhattan's Flatiron District in the fall, a facility that will eventually house more than 200 staffers.

Built during the 1870s on “The Ladies' Mile,” the building was once home to the B. Altman & Co. department store chain. From the Civil War to WWI, the stretch of street from 18th to 24th Streets was home to Lord & Taylor, Hugh O'Neill's, W. & J. Sloane, Best & Co., Arnold Constable and Bergdorf Goodman department stores.

Chris Dixon, co-founder of Hunch, which eBay acquired late last year, will head the new office that will boast of a large public area, space for start-ups and entrepreneur incubation, and a PayPal shopping showcase.

San Jose-based eBay has technology centers in Seattle, Austin, Portland and Tel Aviv.

**MURDOCH 'NOT FIT' TO RUN NEWS CORP.**

News Corp. CEO Rupert Murdoch is “not a fit person” to run a multinational and must take responsibility for the U.K. hacking scandal, according to a scathing report by a select committee of Parliament.

That “unfitness” may impact News Corp.'s ownership of its 39 percent of BSkyB satellite TV operation. News Corp. withdrew a bid to increase that investment stake following the uproar over the phone hacking.

The panel determined that Murdoch and son James, deputy COO of News Corp., presided over a company that emphasized cover-up rather than correcting wrong doing.

The elder Murdoch, last month, testified that he was not aware of the hacking scandal at the now closed *News of the World* tabloid.

The report of the culture, media and sport committee said Murdoch “did not take steps to become fully informed about phone hacking” and “turned a blind eye and exhibited willful blindness to what was going on in his companies and publications.”

Concerning the younger Murdoch, the report said as “the head of a journalistic enterprise, we are astonished that James Murdoch did not seek more information.”

Rebekah Brooks, former News of the World editor

and News International boss, must take responsibility for the “culture which permitted unethical newsgathering methods” concerning Milly Dowler, the murdered girl whose phone was hacked.

“The attempts by the News of the World to get a scoop on Milly Dowler led to a considerable amount of police resource being redirected to the pursuit of false leads,” said the document.

News Corp. is carefully reviewing the report and will respond shortly. “The company fully acknowledges significant wrongdoing at News of the World and apologizes to everyone whose privacy was invaded,” reads its statement.

**Senate Seeks Probe Info**

Senator Jay Rockefeller, who chairs the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, penned a May 2 letter to Lord Leveson, head of the News Corp. hacking probe in the U.K., asking for any information about possible illegal activities that occurred in the U.S. or involved American citizens.

“I would like to know whether News International or any other News Corp. business used hacking, bribing, or other similar tactics when operating in the U.S.,” wrote the West Virginia Democrat.

He's looking for “evidence suggesting that News International employees, or their agents intercepted messages created by U.S. citizens, or messages that originated in the U.S.”

Rockefeller praised the Leveson Inquiry as an “absolutely essential exercise in transparency and accountability.”

He believes that while “members of the media have the freedom to aggressively probe their government's activities and expose wrongdoing,” they also have a duty to obey the law.

“Their rights as journalists are very properly counterbalanced by laws that protect citizens' privacy and prevent public corruption,” wrote Rockefeller.

**WSJ Delivers for Rupe**

The *Wall Street Journal* May 3 ripped the British parliamentary panel as a partisan political attack that threatens the existence of a vigorous free press.

“Even a fair-minded, nonpartisan political inquiry into who can or cannot own a printing press or broadcast license is bound to have a chilling effect on media coverage of government. The potential for political intimidation is great,” noted the lead editorial of the WSJ, which is owned by News Corp.

The Journal imagined the media uproar if the U.S. Congress “decided to opine on the fitness of Carlos Slim, the controversial Mexican billionaire-monopolist to invest in the *New York Times*. The media denunciations of the politicians would be loud and deserved.”

The paper concedes the hacking scandal that resulted in the News of the World shutdown is a serious matter that requires a thorough criminal investigation, “especially for a media company that can't succeed without the daily trust of its readers and viewers.”

News Corp. “has paid a fearsome price in damage to its reputation” and anyone who works there “must clean up our mistakes and messes as rapidly and as transparently as possible,” said the editorial.

**MEDIA NEWS continued**

The Journal doesn't know how the hacking scandal will play out, "but the last outcome anyone should want is that it becomes a pretext for the political class in the U.K., or the U.S. to decide who is fit or unfit to cover the political class."

**Scandal Hits NY Daily News Editor**

The parliamentary report also says *New York Daily News* editor Colin Myler misled the inquiry, which may lead to a contempt charge.

Myler was editor of the now closed News of the World when the hacking scandal erupted in 2007 and remained there until News Corp. chairman Rupert Murdoch shut down the tabloid last year.

Myler joined the Daily News four months. He stands by his testimony.

Mort Zuckerman, owner of the News, has expressed "total confidence" in his editor and noted more information will be forthcoming from the British investigators.

**BICKHAM TAKES CHARTER COO JOB**

John Bickham, who was president of cable and communications at Cablevision, took the COO post at Charter Communications on April 30.

He follows Tom Rutledge, Cablevision's ex-COO, who shifted to St. Louis-based Charter late last year. Rutledge said Bickham "knows the industry well and appreciates what it takes to run operations most effectively."

Bickham has been in the cable business for more than 25 years. Before Cablevision, he was executive VP for Time Warner Cable and founding executive of KBLCOM.

He serves on the Cable Center Board.

**JANNOT JOINS RD**

Mark Jannot has joined Reader's Digest North America as chief content officer for its handyman and enthusiast collection of magazines.

That roster includes *The Family Handyman*, *Taste of Home*, *Birds & Blooms*, *Country*, *Farm & Ranch* and *Reminisce*. He is to make sure there's a "unified creative voice" across multiple platforms.

Dan Lagani, president of RDNA, said Jannot has a "reputation for editorial excellence" and "experience in the digital and magazine spaces to make him an ideal candidate to speed the brand transformation process."

Jannot joins from Bonnier Technology Group, where he was editorial director for magazines like *Popular Science*, *American Photo*, *Popular Photography* and *Sound & Vision*.

Earlier, he was editor-in-chief of *Popular Science* and was responsible for the launch of one of the first magazine apps for the iPad.

**PR AMONG GINGRICH CAMPAIGN DEBTS**

Newt Gingrich's suspended presidential campaign owes two Washington PR firms \$179,000, a portion of more than \$4M in debt left behind by the White House bid.

The Gingrich campaign in March made a series of staff cuts and outsourced its advance operation to

Gordon C. James PR in D.C. It owes the firm \$144K after paying \$67K in March a balance of more than \$211K, according to campaign records.

The campaign also owes \$35K to JC Watts Enterprises, the firm of former Rep. J.C. Watts tapped for strategic communications and community relations work.

Michael Krull, principal and managing director at GCJPR who is a college friend of Gingrich's wife, Callista, was campaign coordinator for the Gingrich campaign while Gordon James served as director of advance. Another staffer of the PR Firm, Lisa James, was state director of Arizona for the campaign.

James, in a statement to Fox News, said his firm is working closely with the campaign to resolve the invoices, adding, "We remain supportive of the Gingrich family and are confident that we will receive our final payment." The firm previously worked with Gingrich's fund-raising organization, American Solutions for winning the Future, which shut down after four years last August after going bankrupt.

The Gingrich campaign's website acknowledges the end of the push but is still soliciting donations. "Thank you but we still need your support," reads the opening message.

**ROMNEY FOREIGN POLICY SPOKESMAN QUILTS**

Mitt Romney foreign policy spokesman Richard Grenell has left the presidential campaign after less than a month, citing "hyper-partisan discussion of personal issues."

Grenell, who led United Nations communications for the Bush administration, is openly gay and was a target of criticism from conservatives in the Republican camp. He also made brash remarks on Twitter about Rachel Maddow and Callista Gingrich and was benched in a big foreign policy week in the presidential campaign.

In a statement, Grenell said his "ability to speak clearly and forcefully on the issues has been greatly diminished by the hyper-partisan discussion of personal issues that sometimes comes from a presidential campaign."

Romney campaign manager Matt Rhoades said in a statement that the campaign urged Grenell to stay on. "We are disappointed that Ric decided to resign from the campaign for his own personal reasons," said Rhoades. "We wanted him to stay because he had superior qualifications for the position he was hired to fill."

Grenell was tapped to speak for the campaign on national security and foreign policy.

*Politico* noted Grenell's first Twitter message after joining the campaign said "not all gays" are "big government liberals"

In one widely circulated tweet, American Family Association issues director Bryan Fischer said, "Romney picks out & loud gay as a spokesman. If personnel is policy, his message to the pro-family community: drop dead."

After eight years in the Bush administration at the U.N., Grenell set up PR shop Capitol Media Partners in L.A.

**NEWS OF PR FIRMS****LASZLO RE-OPENS D.C. SHOP**

PR and political consultant Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi has re-opened a consulting shop in Washington, D.C. after a decade founding and building up The Israel Project, a non-profit focused on educating the press and public about Israel and the Middle East.

Laszlo, a former Democratic National Committee spokeswoman who consulted for the Clinton presidential campaign and other candidates, has opened Laszlo Strategies on K Street in the capital to offer media strategies and political counsel with an additional focus on strategic communications for non-profits which center on diseases and disabilities.

"I care deeply about these issues and want to make a meaningful positive difference," said Mizrahi. "I'm looking forward to helping them communicate their messages effectively both in Washington and nationally. I want to bring attention and success to their important efforts."

Six staffers of her previous firm are working with the newly constitute L&A, among 13 total staffers. Her former COO Cathy Bolinger has taken the reins on The Israel Project, which Laszlo says now employs 70 people with a budget around \$11M.

Info and bios are at laszlostrategies.com.

**GRAYLING UNVEILS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT UNIT**

Grayling has launched a specialist public engagement and consultation unit, Grayling Engage, which the firm says combines consultation expertise with strategic and hands-on communications.

The U.K.-based practice services public and private sector clients under the direction of Hannah Wynne. She reports to James Ford, managing director of Grayling's public sector, health and skills team.



Wynne

Wynne, previously with Dialogue by Design and 3G Communications, noted sweeping changes in the U.K. are driving the need for engagement with the public sector.

"With councils transforming services, the National Health Service reconfiguring ... and the private sector continuing to invest in major infrastructure and housing programs, effective public consultation is becoming ever more important especially as 'No' campaigns become more sophisticated," she said. "We are finding that clients want an integrated approach - expert advice on running public consultations combined with the PR, digital and public affairs mix."

**COPPOLA OPENS IN JACKSONVILLE**

Maria Coppola, former director of PR for Broadstreet Marketing and PR in Jacksonville, Fla., has opened Coppola PR in Jacksonville Beach, to handle assignments like media relations, strategic reputation building, management and protection, crisis planning and communications, and special event planning.

She was previously senior VP at The McCormick Agency and a broadcast journalist.

Info: [www.coppolapr.com](http://www.coppolapr.com).

**NEW ACCOUNTS****New York Area**

**Corbin-Hillman Communications**, New York/Potter & Moore's British Celebrity Hairstylist brand Lee Stafford, for a PR campaign introducing the line to the U.S. market as well as increase awareness of the company's brands.

**The Susan Magrino Agency**, New York/Castro Convertibles, home furnishings; Sophia Graydon, new sleep- and loungewear line for women, and L'OBJET, home décor collections brand.

**Hawkins International**, New York/Marti Istanbul, luxury hotel slated to open later this year, for media relations, including social media and traditional media outreach.

**CJP Communications**, New York/Incapital LLC, underwriter and distributor of fixed income securities and other financial products, as AOR for PR for its overall brand and suite of products.

**Southeast**

**TransMedia Group**, Boca Raton, Fla./Palm Beach Neuropsychology Assocs., to publicize Dr. Raphael Wald's expertise in neuropsychology and psychotherapy, and Senior Concierge Providers, in-home elderly service care provider, for PR.

**Write2Market**, Atlanta/Lightning Eliminators, lightning prevention solutions, for PR.

**The Buzz Agency**, Delray Beach, Fla./Clearband Hi-Speed Internet; Town of Seaside, Fla.; Sundry House, boutique inn and restaurant; Living Color Aquariums, which created and maintains the new Miami Marlins Stadium aquariums; Delray Beach Library Centennial Celebration, and the City of Boca Raton Police Athletic League.

**Cervelle Group**, Orlando/Union Equity, pink sheets-traded commercial truck leasing business, for IR and media relations.

**West**

**Landis Communications**, San Francisco/California Bank & Trust; AAA Club Partners, holding company for 10 AAA clubs; Maxthon, China-based tech company, for launch of web browser in U.S.; Vino Volo, operator of 18 in-airport wine lounges; Backcountry Pictures, filmmaking and production, for promotion of new film, "California Forever," set for PBS debut in the fall; Direct Access Marketing, for PR for witness crematory Chapel of the Chimes, and REDF, venture philanthropy group, for strategic comms.

**Allison+Partners**, San Francisco/WhaleShark Media, online coupon and deals marketplace, for PR for the RetailMeNot brand and corporate communications for WSM, following a competitive review. The company also tapped GSD&M, Austin, for creative and media duties for RetailMeNot.

**Eileen Koch & Company**, Los Angeles/Medbox, prescription drug vending machine marker locked in a legal battle with rival Dispense Labs, for PR.

**International**

**Clarion Communications**, London/ Calligaris, Italian furniture brand, for U.K. PR, including a show home event, on-going product placement, influencer targeting, social media support and media trips to Milan. CC is part of WPP.

— Greg Hazley

**NEWS OF SERVICES****VOCUS REVENUES UP, BUT LOSS TOPS \$10M**

PR and marketing software company Vocus said first quarter revenue climbed 29% to \$34.9M over 2011 on a large jump in new subscriptions, although net loss widened to \$10.8M from \$1.9M a year earlier.

The company said profit was hit by \$4.8M in acquisition expenses – it bought email marketing provider iContact for \$169M in cash and stock in February – including \$2.9M in professional fees and \$1.9M in severance costs.

“Q1 was a great quarter for Vocus highlighted by better-than-expected bookings, strong momentum for our marketing suite and social media product, and a strong start on our sales expansion plan,” said CEO Rick Rudman, who noted its social media campaign and monitoring product, introduced last year, could contribute as much as \$15M to revenue in 2012.

Shares in Vocus, which raised its revenue projections for the year, were up as much as 10 percent to the \$14 range in morning trading May 2, in contrast to a 40-percent plunge after the company announced the iContact deal in February and said 2012 revenues would be affected by several factors, including a large expansion of its sales force.

Rudman said the company hired 71 more sales reps (20 from iContact) to meet its expansion goal to have 450 reps by the end of the year, up from 270 in January.

Vocus added 1,196 net new subscription customers during Q1 (up 75%) with clients like Bose Corp., Mary Kay and Whirlpool, and ended the quarter with 13,103 subscribing customers.

The company, which implemented a price increase on April 2, raised its revenue forecast for the year to the range of \$169.1 million to \$170.3 million.

**USDA WANTS TO TRAIN PAOs**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture wants to train as many as 80 public affairs officers about building a strategic communications plan to support its Natural Resources Conservation Service, the arm of the FDA that counsels private landowners and farmers for issues like clean air, clean energy, and climate change.

The service, via RFP, is looking for a firm to train its PA staff via webinars on the value and logistics of strategic communications planning. Consultants must have training in strategic communications planning, PR or a related field.

Proposals are due May 18. View the RFP: <http://odwpr.us/ISczBQ>.

**NASDAQ ACQUIRES GRC SOFTWARE CO.**

The NASDAQ OMX Group said it has agreed to acquire governance, risk management and compliance software developer B Wise. NASDAQ said it will offer B Wise’s services through its Corporate Solutions software technology business, which includes its investor and public relations services.

B Wise was founded in 1994.

Robert Pijselman, CEO, B Wise, added, “We believe in a world where all key information related to compliance, risk, and sustainability is made available to stakeholders in an integrated, efficient way.”

**PEOPLE****Joined**

**Emily Buchanan**, senior VP and deputy practice director, MSLGroup, New York, to senior principal, chair of brand marketing and social engagement, Carmichael Lynch Spong, Minneapolis. She was previously at MWW Group and Karwoski & Courage/Martin Williams.

**Buchanan**

**Lauren Pratapas**, director of new media for House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif., to Story Partners, Washington, D.C., as senior director. Ashley LaGanga, former deputy press secretary to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), joins as writer/editor. And Lisa Chapman, associate at HDMK, and Elyse Petroni, A/E at GolinHarris, join as senior associates.

**Lynne Harris**, corporate comms. director, NISH, to The Consumer Specialty Products Assn., Washington, D.C., as VP of communications. She is a former news anchor, assignment editor, reporter and talk show producer for WILM-AM (Wilmington, Del.), WAMU-FM and WPFW-FM (D.C.).

**Joanne Colan**, former MTV Europe VJ and anchor and lead writer of the vlog Rocketboom, to Edelman, New York, as senior VP and senior content strategist. She’s to have an emphasis on short-form sharable video. Colan recently was a correspondent for Discovery’s “Dean of Invention.”

**Colan**

**Kurt Heath**, who ran his own shop, Health Media Consulting, to LT PR, Portland, Ore., as account manager. He was previously press secretary to Rep. Dave Weldon (R-Fla.) and Sen. Peter Fitzgerald (R-Ill.).

**Phil Reay-Smith**, consumer editor of ITV’s “Daybreak,” to Ogilvy PR, London, as head of media for the office.

**Promoted**

**Alisa Harrison** to senior VP, communications and marketing, International Franchise Association, Washington, D.C. She joined in 2008. Matthew Haller was promoted to the new position of VP, public affairs and Chief of Staff to the president & CEO. He joined in 2010.

**Ernest DelBuono** to chair of the crisis practice for Levick Strategic Communications, Washington, D.C. He is a senior VP and joined the firm in 2010 after stints like press assistant to Coast Guard Commandant Thad Allen, PAO during the Exxon Valdez oil spill response, and deputy director of the Federal Joint Information Center for Hurricane Andrew.

**DelBuono**

**Andrew Fimka** to VP, Story Partners, Washington, D.C. He joined in August 2011.

**Martin von Arronet** to senior VP, corporate communications and head of group staff communications, AB Electrolux, Stockholm. He joined in 2011 after comms. stints with Royal Dutch Shell.

## **BRUNSWICK REVAMPS TOP MANAGEMENT**

Brunswick Group U.S. head Susan Gilchrist was named global CEO while London partner Rob Pinker was tapped as COO in a revamp of the firm's top leadership.

Both report to executive chairman and founder Alan Parker, who the firm said is being "freed up to take on increased external and client facing roles."



**Gilchrist**

Last year, U.K. reports indicted Brunswick partners were considering a plan to distribute 40 percent of shares to its more than 80 partners, a sign Parker was preparing to cede control of the 25-year-old firm he founded.

Gilchrist was a London partner at the firm who moved to New York in 2010 to run its U.S. operations, which includes four

offices. Pinker operates out of London and Johannesburg.

As part of the shuffle, Michael Buckley, who started the firm's San Francisco office, was named U.S. managing partner to take over Gilchrist's previous role. Mark Palemer was promoted to lead Dallas/Fort Worth and Itumeleng Mahabane to lead Johannesburg.

The firm is also opening a São Paulo office, its 20th worldwide, under partner Thomas Kamm. Ana Paula Pessoa, CFO of Brazilian media company Infoglobo, is joining that outpost, as well.

Brunswick was the No. 1 M&A PR advisor for the U.S. in Q1 by deal value, handling 21 transactions worth \$32.5B, according to mergermarket.

## **PR FIRMS WORK IMAGERY MERGER ATTEMPT**

Commercial satellite imagery provider GeoEye on May 5 made an unsolicited pitch to acquire rival DigitalGlobe in a \$792M cash and stock deal.

GeoEye has engaged Brunswick Group to bolster its PR for the bid, which the Herndon, Va.-based company says is a "friendly transaction" that would create the largest fleet of high resolution commercial imagery satellites in the world, serving customers like the U.S. government, the oil and gas industry, and insurance sector.

"This proposal delivers exceptional value for the combatant commanders, national decision makers, civil users and disaster relief workers, who have a critical need for unclassified commercial imagery," said GeoEye CEO Matt O'Connell.

Longmont, Colo.-based DigitalGlobe, which is working with Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher, acknowledged the "unsolicited" offer a few hours later the same day, saying its board and advisors would review the pitch and urged shareholders to take no action. But DigitalGlobe followed up May 6 with a public statement rebuffing the offer.

GeoEye's \$17-per-share offer is a 26% percent premium on DigitalGlobe's May 3 share price and would be payable with \$8.50 in cash and \$8.50 in GeoEye stock.

DigitalGlobe posted first quarter 2012 revenue of \$87.0 million, up 12%, with net income of \$3.8M. GeoEye Q1 revenues were \$89.3M, up 3.1%, on net income of \$13.2M.

## **BGR REPS MAURITIUS**

BGR Government Affairs has inked a \$25K a month contract with Mauritius, the island nation off the coast of Africa, for "fact-finding, strategic counsel, reputation building and tactical planning" as it concerns the dispute over the Chagos Archipelago.

Chagos is the site of America's Diego Garcia Air Base. That Indian Ocean outpost supported bombing runs over Afghanistan and Iraq.

The U.K. purchased Chagos from former colony Mauritius in 1965. Secret papers made public last month by Britain's Home Office shows that the U.K. and U.S. forcibility removed about 1,500 people from Chagos to make way for the air base.

More than 28,000 people have signed a petition to the White House, calling for the U.S. to provide compensation for the displaced islanders and their families.

Morris Reid, a former Clinton White House staffer, and Walker Roberts, managing director of the BGR's London office, work the Mauritius account.

## **HILLS BALFOUR DEFENDS ARIZONA TOURISM**

Hills Balfour has defended its U.K. PR contract with the Arizona Office of Tourism, following an RFP process.

The travel PR specialty firm won a 2007 review for the \$5K base pact to promote the Grand Canyon State in the U.K. and Ireland, the state's No. 3 international market behind Mexico (Jackson Marketing Int'l) and Canada (Connect Worldwide Int'l).

HB works tourism PR for Scottsdale, Chicago, Las Vegas and Texas, among others.

The state released an RFP in early March for the account noting Brits' affection for the state's sunny weather, Western culture and national/state parks.

The Canada and Mexico pacts will be up for review in 2013.

HMA Public Relations handles U.S. PR for the Office of Tourism.

## **EDELMAN ALUM TO EXPION**

Zena Weist, former VP-digital strategy at Edelman, has joined Raleigh-based Expion, maker of social software, in the VP-strategy post. She reports to CEO Peter Heffring.



**Weist**

Weist is a 17-year veteran of the digital space, working at H&R Block, Sprint, Hallmark and Embarg.

Heffring co-founded Expion in 2009 after selling Ceres Integrated Solutions to NCR for \$90M and serving as president of its Teradata CRM division.

He likes Weist's "industry-specific knowledge and big brand experience."

Expion's software helps clients govern, schedule, moderate, analyze and share content on Facebook and other social channels. It provides real-time community intelligence so brands can optimize consumer engagement and ad performance.

Expion counts Coca-Cola, 7-Eleven, Samsung, Barnes & Noble and Applebee's as clients.

## PR OPINION

**Jon Iwata, IBM PR chief since 2002, who last month received** the Paladin Award of the PR Society Foundation, has presided over a PR department whose memberships in PRS declined from 15-16 in the 1980s and 1990s to six currently.

The last printed members' directory of PRS in 2004 showed nine IBM PR people, not including Iwata. IBM employs 433,000.

Iwata joined the elite, secretive (PR) Seminar in 2002 and in 2003 joined the elite and almost as secretive Arthur W. Page Society, an offshoot of Seminar.

Membership fees for Seminar are about \$3,500 yearly. Iwata, as chair of Seminar in 2007, led in removing "PR" from the name of the group, citing the few members who have "PR" in their titles. The annual four-day meeting is always at one of the top resorts in the U.S. Travel/hotel/meal costs can equal or exceed \$3,500.

Donna Shalala, president of the University of Miami and Secretary of Health & Human Services under President Clinton, was among the speakers in 2011. The meeting was at the Ritz-Carlton, South Beach, Fla.

Membership in Page is \$1,395 yearly and attending Page meetings can add thousands to that.

Iwata is also a member of The Wisemen, a New York group founded in 1938 by John Hill comprised of many of the execs who belong to both Seminar and Page. Ten years of memberships and activities in Seminar and Page cost about \$100,000 which is where IBM (or Iwata himself) invested in memberships in PR groups. Employees typically have their companies pay PR memberships and PRS was obviously not on the approved list at IBM.

### **Seminar, Page Are 3/c's; Where's "Education?"**

Seminar and Page have the 501/c/3 tax-free status meant for charitable and educational institutions. Companies can make tax-free gifts to C/3's and deduct it from their incomes. That is not possible for c/6's such as the PR Society.

Everything about Seminar, including its very existence, is cloaked in secrecy, which calls into question its promise of being educational. It only "educates" its 150 or so members.

Resume-trading and networking are also chief activities of Seminar members because of the high rate of job turnover of the PR execs which is linked to high CEO turnover. Only seven of the 26 new members in 2005 were at the 2011 meeting where 49 of the attendees were there for the first time. This is a rough count of members who lost jobs since there is a limit on memberships and those who lose jobs are only allowed to come to one more meeting.

The secrecy and the participation by at least 25 leading journalists and publishers in Seminar led Peter Sussman, a founder of the Ethics Board of the Society of Professional Journalists, to write that the journalists broke at least 10 articles of the code by not reporting its existence. Seminar has top speakers whose wisdom should be shared with the PR community.

Page shares some of the secretive habits of Seminar including a private membership list of about 400. Page members have access to the phone and e-mail contacts of editors without providing that information on themselves. Page meetings are open to the press but it should also supply texts and summaries of what speakers have said.

Media, and especially newspapers, have been put on a starvation diet by corporations. Newspaper ad revenues plunged \$29 billion to \$20B in 2011 from 2006.

Cash-rich companies like IBM (\$12.3B cash/investments) and Apple (\$110B in cash/investments and no debt) could at least subscribe to the websites of publications if they don't want to advertise. Economists say corporations are sitting on about \$2 trillion in cash reserves that should be put to work creating jobs.

Although the late Steve Jobs of Apple is usually referred to in the most reverent of tones, Brooklyn College Prof. Eric Alterman called him "An American Disgrace" and "SOB" in the Nov. 28, 2011 *The Nation* for "hoarding an \$8.3 billion fortune to no apparent purpose" and cancelling "all the company's charity programs."

Iwata, on receiving the Paladin Award in 2011, appeared to accept the decline of traditional media.

IBM's PR people are now operating in "new profession" that has moved from mass communications to engagement with individuals, he said. His 2009 Institute of PR speech referred to PR people as being in a "priesthood." He said they are "tasked now with making others as expert as we are—and that makes some of us uncomfortable. We're the crafters of messages. We're the authorized spokespeople. We're the producers of high-quality video, print, events and online."

### **Where Are the "Leaders?"**

Some PRS members believe we erred in headlining April 30 that "PRS Leaders Skip Burson Dinner."

The definition of "leader" is someone who gives orders that are obeyed.

PRS chair Gerard Corbett was at the dinner and assured us there is no boycott against the O'Dwyer Co. We told him we wanted confirmation of that the next day by PRS COO Bill Murray and/or VP-PR Arthur Yann so that proper hearing equipment can be arranged for us at the 2012 Assembly and conference in San Francisco.

No such call or e-mail has ever come from Murray or Yann. We did get a rare e-mail response from Murray saying he was out-of-town on other PRS business and that is why he skipped the Harold Burson dinner.

We e-mailed back asking what was more important than a dinner that drew 2012 chair Corbett, 2011 chair Rosanna Fiske, chair-elect Mickey Nall and the staff heads of Page, Institute for PR and Council of PR Firms that he knew about months ago? There was no response. PR, faced with thorny, multi-faced issues, has a tendency to freeze.

Participation by IBM and other major companies in the PR Society is needed to bring about reforms. Instead, their PR executives have left governance of the Society to others and have gone to small, private groups such as Seminar, Page and Wisemen.

— Jack O'Dwyer