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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
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KETCHUM SWIPES MASTERCARD

Ketchum has picked up the MasterCard USA PR/corporate communications programming in a competitive pitch that included incumbent Weber Shandwick.

WS, which is part of Interpublic, will continue its work overseas for the financial services giant that boasts of handling more than 23B transactions a year.

MasterCard's PR roster includes APCO Worldwide for issues management; Cohn & Wolfe, digital/social, and Taylor, consumer work.

Non-roster independents Edelman and Ruder Finn also were in the pitch mix for MasterCard.

Andrew Bowins heads MasterCard's worldwide communications effort. He told AdAge.com that Ketchum will "help build program frameworks, shape strategy and develop content and engagement models across channels."

Ketchum, which is an arm of Omnicom, worked for MasterCard's arch-rival, Visa, in the past.



FRAUD CHARGES BITE NEXT FIFTEEN

Next Fifteen Group is delaying release of its full-year financials after uncovering an alleged fraud scheme in its Bite Communications unit.

The British-based holding company (Text 100, M Booth and Outcast Agency) issued a statement that calls it a "victim of a complex fraud involving a senior member of the finance team in its Bite North American subsidiary."

Next Fifteen has notified the Federal Bureau of Investigation and is working with auditor BDO and private investigator Kroll to carry out a full forensic probe of the matter.

That investigation is to run for at least a month. The financials were slated for a Nov. 6 release.

Next Fifteen believes the alleged fraud is an isolated incident of personal embezzlement, rather than an accounting irregularity.

The firm said it will ultimately release financial results that are in line with market expectations.



PB BUFFS IMAGE OF LEBANON'S BANKS

Patton Boggs has inked a \$50K monthly retainer pact to promote the image of Lebanon's banking system, which faces U.S. pressure due to alleged ties with terror groups and the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad.

The move follows the U.S. Treasury Dept.'s February designation of Lebanese Canadian Bank as a "primary money laundering concern," charged with channeling funds to Hezbollah.

Lebanon's press reports that Neal Steven Wolin, Treasury's deputy secretary; Dan Glaser, assistant secretary for terrorist financing, and David Cohen, under-secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, are frequent visitors to Beirut.

PB's one-year pact is with Banque du Liban, the country's central bank. The goal is the "promotion of the image of Lebanese banking before the U.S. Congress and Administration."

The firm will determine its fee based on the standard billing rate of the Lebanon lobbying team. That unit is led by Tommy Boggs, who bills at the \$990 hourly rate.

He's assisted by Larry Harris (who was MCI Communications' liaison to ATT/Federal Communications Commission and leader of its landmark antitrust fight bills at \$960 an hour), Caffey Norman (\$750 per-hour for the veteran of the BCCI scandal) and Graham Wisner \$660 hour for corporate lobbying veteran of the U.S./India nuke pact).

DENTERLEIN ACQUIRES MORRISSEY

Boston's Denterlein has acquired Morrissey & Co., the firm of the late Peter Morrissey who died of brain cancer in August at the age of 59. He founded M&C in 1999.

Geri Denterlein is the former communications director for the Massachusetts Dept. of Health and assistant press secretary for Governor Mike Dukakis.

Her firm has serviced healthcare (Lowell General Hospital, Tufts Health Plan) and financial services (Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, Sovereign Bank) clients.

The combined firm has a staff of about 20.

DEMOCRATIC OPERATIVE REPS GITMO 2

Democratic political operative Joe Trippi is representing the last two Kuwait detainees held by the U.S. at the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prison complex.

As consultant to Potomac Square Group, Trippi is to have input on its "strategic communications" campaign to achieve the "reparation of the two remaining Kuwaiti detainees."

The effort is funded by International Counsel Bureau, the London lawyer firm hired by the families of the prisoners.

MANGALINDAN TAKES H+K POST

Hill+Knowlton Strategies has named Mylene Mangalindan senior VP-media relations in San Francisco. Reporting to Paul Turner, executive VP/S.F. GM, Mangalindan is to focus on outreach for the corporate and technology practices.

As former VP-corporate communications at Rearden Commerce, Mangalindan has experience in positioning, messaging and customer contact.



Mangalindan

She managed RC's PR/internal communications, as well as analyst relations and social media programming.

Earlier, Mangalindan was director of communications at Hewlett-Packard, *Wall Street Journal* staff writer and Bloomberg reporting walking the Internet and software beats.

MILITARY PR CONTRACTOR FACES PROBE

A military PR contractor which has worked with the U.S. government since 2004 is under criminal investigation by the Pentagon inspector general.

USA Today, which saw two of its reporters allegedly targeted in a reputation attack scheme by the contractor, Leonie Industries, reported that the federal criminal probe was revealed in a letter to Rep. Hank Johnson (D-Ga.).

Johnson in May threatened to pull funding for military PR operations if the Pentagon did not investigate evidence that the reporters were targeted after reporting on Leonie's robust contracts and apparent failure to \$4M in taxes on time.

A co-owner of the company admitted in June to establishing websites aimed at the *USA Today* reporters who reported on his company, but said he did not use Leonie resources. The co-owner, Camille Chidiac, has been banned from handling military contracts but Leonie continues to handle PR work because the ban related to Chidiac as an individual.

The Defense Criminal Investigative Service is handling the criminal probe, which is looking at Leonie's role in the smear websites.

USAT noted the Government Accountability Office is also investigating the military's information operations.

PEPSICO PRO TO C&B

Dan Bryant, who was senior VP for global public policy and government affairs at PepsiCo, has joined Covington & Burling in Washington.

The seven-year PepsiCo veteran was responsible for its outreach to governments, non-governmental organizations, advocacy groups and institutions throughout the world.

Prior to work at the beverage-based conglomerate, Bryant worked in the Justice Dept. as assistant attorney general for legislative affairs.

Timothy Hester, chair of C&B's management committee, said in a statement that Bryant's "talents and ability to build relationships in both the corporate and political worlds makes him ideally suited to help us build on the strengths of our premier public policy and government affairs practice."

The firm recently hired Paul Adamson, a veteran of Weber Shandwick and Edelman, to head its European PA operation.

PENGUIN, RANDOM HOUSE MERGE

Pearson's Penguin Group consumer publishing division and Bertelsmann's Random House unit have merged operations in the latest consolidation move in the book business. The resulting company is Penguin Random House.

In reviewing the long-term trends and considerable change affecting the consumer publishing industry, Pearson and Bertelsmann both concluded that the publishing and commercial success of Penguin and Random House can best be sustained and enhanced through a partnership with another major international publishing house," the companies said in a joint statement.

A merger of the companies creates an entity with more than a 25 percent stake in the global English language consumer book market.

The merger disclosure comes as Pearson CEO of 16 years Marjorie Scardino is stepping down at the end of the year. She is to be succeeded by John Fallon, who has run Pearson's education business.

The management shuffle also has triggered speculation about the divestiture of the *Financial Times*.

HDMK POCKETS \$256K FROM PANAMA

The Republican PR/media shop of HDMK has just released its contract with the President of Panama showing fees of \$256K for the period from Jan. 15 through Oct. 31.

For Ricardo Martinelli, HDMK was to provide information to the media about the "priorities and achievements" of his administration, media train members of his team and pen and place press releases.

Martinelli, for its part, was to provide space for HDMK staffers in the Ministry of the Presidency.

The U.S./Panama free trade agreement, which was negotiated five years ago, finally went into effect Oct. 31. Ten percent of U.S. imports/exports flow through the Panama Canal, which is the midst of a \$5B expansion program.

HDMK is the firm of Terry Holt, ex-spokesperson for Speaker of the House John Boehner and former Majority Leader Dick Armey; Trent Duffy, deputy press secretary for President George W. Bush; Jim Morrell, chief of staff to former Republican Conference chair Deborah Pryce, and Chad Kolton, ex-PA chief of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

MARTHA STEWART CLEANS HOUSE

Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia is slicing about 10 percent of its 600-member workforce, putting *Whole Living* on the auction block and shifting *Everyday Food* from a standalone magazine to a supplement to its *Martha Stewart Living* flagship publication in an effort to right the media combine.

CEO Lisa Gersh called the strategy a “decisive action to drive the company's return to sustained profitability by reducing costs for production and distribution,” according to her statement.

MSLO projects the revamp to result in a \$35M annual savings.

Gersh said the company is pushing an emphasis on digital, mobile and video platforms in order to “put our expert lifestyle content in closer reach of consumers.”

Everyday Food chalked up a first-half circulation of 1.1M. Whole Life's circulation was 760K.

MSLO revenues during Q3 fell to \$43.5M from \$52.2M. Net loss widened to \$50.8M from \$9.7M a year ago. The 2012 period red ink including a \$44.3M non-cash impairment charge for the write-down of goodwill for the publishing segment.

Gersh said the performance was “in line with our expectations but not our ambitions for the company.”

She anticipates the MSLO revamp will yield “bottom-line benefits” in 2013.

CLARK TAKES WEATHER CHANNEL PRESIDENCY

David Clark, who was executive VP-sales and partnership development at Madison Square Garden, has been named president of the Weather Channel Network.

David Kenny, CEO of The Weather Co., believes Clark “understands the brand promise” of the WNC.

That's an “understanding how it must super serve our core audience of enthusiasts,” according to Kenny's statement.

Prior to MSG, Clark was at music network Fuse as its executive VP/general manager in charge of programming, production, marketing and ad sales.

Earlier, he was at Joost.com, aggregator of premium video entertainment content, and MTV Networks.

The Weather Channel posted recorded viewership, topping the ratings of all other cable stations, as Hurricane Sandy approached and then battered the East Coast.

The Weather Co. is owned by NBCUniversal, Blackstone Group and Bain Capital.

MURDOCH TAKES SHINE TO ROSS

Elisabeth Murdoch has recruited Rich Ross, who was chairman of Walt Disney Studios and president of Disney Channels Worldwide, as CEO of her Shine America TV production house.

He takes over for Carl Fennessy, who as planned will return to Australia mid-2013 after a two-year stint. Ross will join SA in January.

Murdoch called Ross a “world-class executive and

the ideal leader to build on our extraordinary momentum at Shine America,” according to her statement.

Ross began his career at Nickelodeon, rising to VP-program enterprises before moving to FX Networks in 1993 as part of its launch team in charge of development and production.

He joined DCW in 1996 and developed programs such as, “Hannah Montana,” “Lizzie McGuire” and “That's So Raven.”

As chairman of Disney Studios from October 2009 to last April, Ross released “Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides,” “Alice in Wonderland,” “The Muppets” and Disney-Pixar's “Toy Story 3” and “Cars 2.”

Shine America's shows are “MasterChef” (Fox) and “The Biggest Loser” (NBC) and the now joined by upcoming series “The Face” (Oxygen).

Shine is part of News Corp.

U.K. PHONE HACKING HITS PR FIRM

Phone hacking by journalists in the U.K., which has centered on News Corp., may have targeted PR firm Citigate Dewe Rogerson, according to reports.

The firm, a top London M&A and financial PR advisor, has acknowledged that it was alerted by a mobile provider in 2011 that police were investigating unauthorized hacking into three Citigate mobile phones.

The hacking was centered on attempts in 2005 and '06 and the firm told the U.K.'s *City A.M.* that there has not been recent follow-up and it does not believe the inquiry is ongoing.

The *Daily Mail* noted the revelation by Citigate is the first time the hacking scandal has involved market-sensitive information rather than celebrity or crime reporting.

A senior Citigate exec told the paper that he was told by mobile provider O2 that his phone had been hacked “over an extended period.” The exec added: “It is something which could have damaged my professional reputation if word of a deal got out.”

NPR TAPS F-H ALUM FOR CMO SLOT

Emma Carrasco, who worked at Fleishman-Hillard in New York and Los Angeles, moves to NPR Dec. 3 as chief marketing officer. She joins from Miami's Republica, a multiplatform marketing shop.

Carrasco has more than 30 years of PR, branding and marketing experience. She also worked at Spanish-language TV network Univision, handled Hispanic and African-American outreach at McDonald's, and did branding/ad campaigns at Nortel Networks.

NPR CEO Gary Knell, who took that post 10 months ago, called Carrasco a person who will help NPR connect with “people who want a civil and impartial approach to news.”

He also tapped Loren Mayor, who is VP/strategy & ventures at PBS, for the senior VP/strategy post. That's effective Dec. 10.

MEDIA NEWS continued**ZYNGA CUTS STAFF 5%**

Zynga is cutting 150 workers from its 3,000-member work force and retiring 13 games as part of a survival plan of the San Francisco online gaming company.

CEO Mark Pincus reported a third-quarter deficit of \$52M on \$316M revenues. During the nine-month period, Zynga dropped \$161M into the red ink column on revenues of \$970M.

In his blog announcing “structural changes,” Pincus wrote of the program to “streamline our operations, focus our resources on our most strategic opportunities and invest in our future.”

His plan calls for the shutdown of Zynga’s Boston studio, possible closure of studios in Japan and the U.K. Cutbacks at the Austin studio are in the works.

The cost reduction program is expected to generate pre-tax savings this quarter in the range of \$15M to \$20M. That excludes an \$8M to \$12M pre-tax restructuring charge.

“We don’t take these decisions lightly as we recognize the impact to our colleagues and friends who have been on this journey with us,” wrote Pincus. “This is the most painful part of an overall cost reduction plan that also includes significant cuts in spending on data hosting, advertising and outside services, primarily contractors.”

Pincus believes the revamp puts the company on “the right path to deliver on the promise of social gaming” and will “make Zynga into an Internet treasure.”

The Zynga comeback plan includes creation of an alliance with bwin.party, a top “real money gaming operator.”

Zynga’s RMG service and bwin.party will launch poker and 180 casino games including slots, roulette, and blackjack in the U.K.

EXEC PLEADS GUILTY IN PHONY PR FEE SCAM

The former PR chief of video game retailer Gamestop has plead guilty in a scheme to steal \$1.9M from his employer through phony PR agency fees.

The exec, Chris Olivera, “hired” a fictitious outside PR firm called Cloud Communications and pocketed the fees after billing Gamestop for PR services between 2009 and 2011.

The retailer became suspicious and called in federal investigators before firing Olivera last year.

Olivera pleaded guilty on one count of mail fraud, which could lead to up to 20 years in jail and a \$250K fine, in addition to paying back the company.

NBCU TAPS SMITH FOR PR POST

NBCUniversal has elevated Hilary Smith to senior VP, communications, for its entertainment & digital networks and integrated media unit.

Smith, oversees strategic communications and is lead spokeswoman for the division encompassing units like Telemundo, mun2, Bravo Media, Oxygen Media, and iVillage, as well as ad sales and marketing.

The 14-year NBCU vet takes over for Cameron Blanchard, who was tapped as senior VP of corporate comms. for NBCUniversal.

She previously handled NBCU’s digital businesses

(Fandango, DailyCandy, iVillage and Television Without Pity) and led communications for integrated media.

She joined NBC in 1998 as senior manager of PR for “Dateline NBC” after serving as press manager at CBS News.

EDELMAN PLAYS ROLE IN BBC SEX SCANDAL

Edelman London chief Ed Williams is counseling incoming New York Times CEO Mark Thompson regarding the alleged BBC sex scandal surrounding former TV celebrity Jimmy Savile.

Thompson served as the BBC director general at the time the BBC killed a “Newsnight” investigative report covering Savile’s alleged abuse of young children. He denies spiking the program about Savile, who died last year at the age of 84.

Williams left the BBC director of communications post in 2011 to helm the London outpost of the No. 1 independent shop.

NYT chairman Art Sulzberger has expressed support for Thompson, who is to join that company on Nov. 12.

A letter to staffers from Sulzberger and vice chairman Mark Golden stated: “Our opinion was then and remains now that he possesses high ethical standards and is the ideal person to lead our company.”

British police say Savile may have molested more than 300 children.

Edelman also was called in to handle another high-profile British media scandal: the phone hacking spree by Rupert Murdoch’s News York, which led to the shutdown of the *News of the World*.

BLOOMBERG/BUSINESSWEEK NAILS IT

By Kevin McCauley

Taking a cue from political consultant Jim Carville, *BloombergBusinessWeek* declared Hurricane Sandy is solid proof of global warming. Good work.

The magazine concedes it’s not very sophisticated to single out a weather event to support global warming. But c’mon. Look at lower Manhattan and the devastation of Staten Island, Rockaway and New Jersey. Are we to simply accept our current intensified weather as the new normal? That’s putting our heads in the sand.

NYC is not constructed to withstand the wrath of hurricanes like Sandy. Why? Storms of that magnitude simply didn’t happen before. We have to step up our game.

America needs strong political leadership to deal with the climate change issue. Global warming shouldn’t be a partisan issue. It’s an American issue.

There’s hope from politicians like New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. He told President Obama that “we have a 100-year flood every two years now. That is not a political statement. That is a factual statement.”

New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg was less forceful than his magazine, saying he isn’t sure whether it’s climate change or not, but America has to deal with the issue of severe weather.

Hurricane Sandy’s gift to America may be a focus on global warming. The debate is over.

Good job, BloombergBusinessWeek.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**MEREDITH BULKS UP MARKETING UNIT**

Meredith Xcelerated Marketing, the digital and social media agency of publisher Meredith Corp., has added CQ Roll Call's Tom Donnelly as VP, public affairs to its New Media Strategies unit.

Donnelly was director with CQ's advocacy and engagement practice and earlier a founder and VP at Illumen, a digital news and legislative info provider which was acquired by CQRC in 2001. He also worked PA at Ketchum and Dow Chemical.

The Meredith division has also added Gayle Weiswasser, VP of social media for Discovery Communications, as VP, engagement. She was previously with Texas crisis firm TMG Strategies.

James Clark, lead social media strategist for Mindshare, joins as strategy director. He primarily handled the Sprint account at MS and earlier was VP of new business at Visible Technologies.

Also, Megan Malli, previously with AKQA, joins as senior A/D.

WEBER SHANDWICK ACQUIRES KOREA SHOP

Weber Shandwick said Korean digital and social media communications shop SocialLink merged its operations into three-year-old Weber Shandwick Korea on Nov. 1.

Founder Juny Lee assumes the position of VP reporting to managing director Tyler Kim.

Kim called Lee one of the leading digital strategists in Korea.

SL clients include SK Telecom, GM Korea and Samsung Electronics.

MCLEMORE SETS UP HOUSTON SHOP

Ivy McLemore, senior director, corporate comms., Invesco, left the company Oct. 31 and has opened marketing and PR firm Ivy McLemore & Associates, Houston, handling communication training and strategic counsel to investment management and financial services clients.

Prior to eight years at Invesco, he was VP, corporate comms., for AIM Investments and earlier was a senior financial writer and manager of corporate comms. for AIM Funds.

He was a reporter and correspondent for the *Houston Post* and Associated Press, respectively.

HEALTHCARE FIRM ADDS PR, MARKETING

HFS Consultants, an Oakland, Calif.-based healthcare consulting company, has expanded with the addition of a healthcare marketing and PR services division.

The unit covers crisis communication planning, training and support, focus groups, surveys and other marketing research, writing, and social media, among other tasks.

Dennis Erokan, president of The Placemaking Group, which has worked with HFS's marketing

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York Area**

The Pollack PR Marketing Group, New York/Reed Travel Exhibitions, event organizer for the meetings industry, as U.S. PR agency to support a strategic communications campaign for AIBTM – The Americas Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition. The Chicago event is set for June 11-13, 2013.

The firm also picked up The Keller Fay Group, word-of-mouth marketing research and consulting, to lead its PR and integrated marketing efforts.

KCSA Strategic Communications, New York/Vasomedical, medical devices for noninvasive cardiology and diagnostic imaging products, for investor and public relations counsel targeting the healthcare and medical device sectors.

East

360 PR, Boston/Balance Bar, energy bars, for PR.

The Brandon Agency, Myrtle Beach, S.C./Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce, as AOR for branding, creative development, media planning and buying, interactive, PR and social media.

Midwest

Dixon|James Communications,

Chicago/Murphy/Jahn, global architectural firm led by Helmut Jahn, to launch its rebranding to JAHN and handle leadership announcements.

Southwest

Bonefish Communications, Houston/Autotether Marine, maker of wireless kill-switches for marine engines, for PR, marketing and advertising.

Price Target Media, Carson City, Nev./Abby, Inc., oil and gas exploration, for a \$5K/month investor relations pact that includes shares of stock.

West

Bateman Group, San Francisco/Animoto, video creation; Get Satisfaction, customer engagement platform; Heroku, a salesforce.com company, and Zenprise, mobile device management service, all four after competitive reviews. Billings total \$750K in annual revenue.

Work includes corporate and product message refinement, storyline development, thought leadership campaigns, product/service awareness programs including media and blogger outreach, and integrated social media marketing, among others.

Robertson Communications, Rancho San Margarita, Calif./TakeLessons, online provider of music lessons, as AOR for PR, including strategy and execution for the San Diego-based client.

NEWS OF SERVICES**IPR UNVEILS RESEARCH SITE**

The Institute for PR has unveiled a free online research center focused on the “science of social media” at instituteforpr.org/scienceofsocialmedia.

The site includes summaries of articles and books about social media from PR research literature. Summaries include an extended abstract, comments about the research methodology, findings and implications for the practice.

Gainesville, Fla.-based IPR said plans are underway to add information about SM research from practitioners and academic disciplines across journalism, mass communication, business and the social sciences.

IPR president and CEO Frank Ovaitt said the site provides a consolidated source for research-based knowledge about social media and the role it plays in the “science beneath the art of public relations.”

The site also allows users to comment on the research, how they will use it and make suggestions for future research.

Topics covered in the initial lot include Wikipedia use, social media communication between journalists and PR pros, and content analysis of Facebook use by Fortune 100 companies, among others.

An editorial board is comprised of Don Wright, editor; Marcia Distaso, associate editor, and Tina McCorkindale, associate editor.

CMO COUNCIL EYES CONTENT MARKETING

The Chief Marketing Officer Council, which includes 6,000 senior marketing execs, has created the Content ROI Center, a community focused on content marketing.

The council said the center was formed to audit and assess the current state of content marketing while advocating for best practices to improve its quality, influence, and ROI.

The council estimates content marketing now encompasses 25 percent of B2B marketing budgets, a figure it expects to rise.

Donovan Neale-May, executive director of the council, said most companies lack the necessary strategies, processes, resources, and best practices for effective content programs, despite its rising importance.

The launch of the center includes an original report, “Authority Leadership Marketing: Making Content the Cornerstone of Customer Engagement and Relevance,” by Dave Murray, heads the content marketing practice of GlobalFluency.

Info: cmocouncil.org/r/content-roi-whitepaper.

CHICAGO PUB CLUB FOCUSES ON MAGS

The Publicity Club of Chicago slates a panel of Windy City magazine pros on Nov. 14 for a conversation about the future of the industry and how magazines can enhance brands, increase sales or improve reputations.

The 11:30 a.m. event, “That Glossy Look: Getting Your Clients in Magazines,” is set for Maggiano’s Little Italy, 516 N. Clark St., Chicago.

Sue Masaracchia-Roberts, who co-organized the program, noted many magazines have ceased publication while others have dramatically changed their formats and distribution methods.

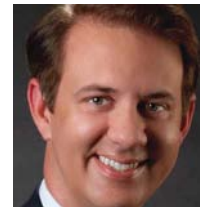
PEOPLE**Joined**

Phil Stone, CFO of the Cancer Center of Santa Barbara, to ReviveHealth, Nashville, Tenn., as the first chief operating officer of the healthcare firm. He was previously an executive VP for Davies Public Affairs in eight years with the firm and will lead Revive’s finances and operations.

**Stone**

President and founder Brandon Edwards called the hire a “milestone” in the firm’s growth.

Kyle Pyron, VP of corporate communications, marketing, sales linkage and strategy, Novation, to VHA Inc., Irving, Tex., as senior VP for marketing and comms. He was comms. specialist for Impel Management.

**Pyron**

Heather Stern, VP of marketing for WPP’s Millward Brown unit, to Lippincott, New York, as chief marketing and communications officer. She was previously a senior conference producer at the Institute for International Research and led marketing communications for Elias Arts.

Esmael Ansari to Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications, Boston, as senior public affairs associate handling grassroots, digital advocacy, and ballot question campaigns. He managed the re-election campaign for Boston City Councilor Rob Consalvo.

Greg Zimprich, former director of brand PR for General Mills, to Kohnstamm Communications, St. Paul, Minn., as senior VP of agency operations and strategic insight, taking the helm of the firm alongside founder Josh Kohnstamm.

Greg Bankhurst, a veteran real estate investment and development exec, to Marketing Maven PR Los Angeles, as VP of branding focused on the firm’s hospitality and gaming division.

Susan Graham, executive director, integrated marketing and national promotions, Fox Broadcasting, to The Regan Group, Hawthorne, Calif., as VP, marketing and strategy. She was director of national promotions at NBC Universal and A/D at Flair Communications.

Julie Bourbonnière, senior comms. advisor, Canada Post, to energi PR, Montreal, as a group account director handling consumer and healthcare accounts. She was previously with Rolls-Royce Canada and Cavalia.

Andrew Waterworth, former managing director and financial practice head, FTI Consulting, to Prosek Partners, New York, as managing director and head of the firm’s London office. He was with FTI and predecessor Financial Dynamics for 15 years.

Caryn Tomlinson, senior VP, global artist relations, EMI Music, to senior VP, corporate comms., Universal Music Group, London. She reports to COO Max Hole and chief communications officer Peter LoFrumento handling internal and external corporate comms. and media relations. She was previously PR director for U.K./Europe at EMI and business coordinator for Mick Jagger from 2001-2002, based in Los Angeles and London.

LEADERS SHOW CRISIS SKILLS DURING SANDY

By Richard E. Nicolazzo, managing partner of Nicolazzo & Assocs.

In normal times they may all have their critics, but the “gang of four” rose to the occasion during the Hurricane Sandy disaster by fine-tuning their crisis communication management skills.

President Barack Obama, NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg, NJ Governor Chris Christie, and NY Governor Andrew Cuomo appeared steady as a rock as they executed the contingency crisis communications playbook during what is being called the worst natural disaster to hit the Northeast in more than a century.

Communications from the White House and New York and New Jersey officials, in particular, were timely, informative, instructive, simplified, and focused on the tasks at hand to protect and save lives and property. It was a far cry from the 2005 communications fiasco during Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.

Obama took charge well before the storm hit, going on national TV to pledge the government’s support and cooperation prior to, during, and after the hurricane. Putting the campaign aside, he looked impacted Americans straight in the eye and said “You will get help.”

Bloomberg, Christie and Cuomo, the men on the hot seat in their respective states, displayed similar resolve. They appeared organized, informed and determined as they appeared at multiple press conferences over a four-day period. No fluff. Just the facts, and lots of them.

Prior to the storm, Christie emerged as the most prolific and forceful in articulating his message. In one press conference he said, “People who ignore Hurricane Sandy warnings and evacuation orders are both ‘stupid and selfis’. We want to avoid significant loss of life, but we could have that if people don’t heed the warnings.”

Bloomberg and Cuomo were equally in command. Two days before Sandy hit, Bloomberg said bluntly, “It’s a massive storm and the greatest danger posed is the coastal surge.”

“The worst is still coming,” Gov. Cuomo warned, hours before he ordered the closure of Whitestone Bridge, Throgs Neck Bridge, Verrazano Narrows Bridge, George Washington Bridge, Henry Hudson Bridge, and Cross Bay Veterans Memorial Bridge.

All four leaders paid close attention to the modern-day crisis management playbook: they got the facts, showed concern, maintained calm, executed clear communications goals and objectives, used communications protocols, repeated their key messages, addressed the issue directly and truthfully, made themselves available 24/7, and scaled their responses appropriately to reflect the gravity of the crisis.

Key Moment for President Obama

The fact that Sandy struck just over a week before the Presidential election created an unintended platform for Obama to demonstrate his crisis communication management skills in a non-political arena. His first step was to suspend campaigning the day before the storm.

Just 48 hours after the storm battered the coast,

Obama was on the ground alongside the governor of New Jersey. Unlike some of his predecessors, the message the President brought to the people in the devastated seaside communities was particularly sharp.

After being introduced by Gov. Christie, Obama said, “We’re not going to tolerate red tape. We’re not going to tolerate bureaucracy, and I’ve instituted a 15-minute rule, essentially, on my staff. You return everybody’s phone calls within 15 minutes.” Powerful words that generated a sound bite captured instantly by news media across the country.

This time, unlike Katrina, FEMA had 2,000 people on the ground just two days after the hurricane hit. Having the “troops in the field” helped legitimize the President’s message. In reality, getting aid to people typically takes longer than expected, but no one can assert that Obama did not take charge on the communications front.

Social Media Shines

While there were some social media abuses, such as the fake photo of hurricane storm clouds surrounding the Statue of Liberty, for the most part city and government officials embraced the medium to a larger degree than ever before.

Social media communications from Gov. Cuomo make the point. He sent 700 Twitter messages during the two days following the storm, featuring everything from photos of the actual storm surge damage to upgrades on the restoration of power and phone lines. In just five days, Cuomo’s followers increased from 20,000 to 50,000.

Hurricane Sandy proves that social media now has to be part of any contingency crisis plan. Just a few years ago, it might have been considered a luxury item. Today, tools like Twitter and Facebook give officials in charge the ability to conduct press and constituent briefings 24/7.

While no one can be certain, it’s likely the timing of Sandy will have an impact on the Obama-Romney battle. The fact that the President (in real-time with real-world challenges) is demonstrating leadership can only redound to his benefit. It’s no coincidence that he’s being seen on TV wearing a “commander-in-chief” leather jacket.

The bottom line may be that the President had a very narrow lead before the storm, a lead that Sandy itself will almost certainly buttress. The old adage still applies: timing in life is everything!

One of the lessons learned from Sandy is that having a pro-active disaster and crisis communications plan in place can play a pivotal role in saving lives. The loss of even one life is too many, but a sharp contrast can be drawn in the case of disorganized communications surrounding Hurricane Katrina in which at least 1,800 died. The death toll for Sandy now stands at 92.

In the end, however, nothing can really stop Mother Nature when she unleashes her wrath. Experts estimate the losses from the storm will approach \$50 billion - about \$30 billion in property damage, the rest in lost economic activity.

Sandy is a storm that will be likely be talked about for the next century.

PR OPINION

Wikipedia, under apparent pressure from the PR Society, has beaten a retreat from an attempt to do a comprehensive history of the 65-year-old organization (<http://tinyurl.com/9llbpuo>).

An original posting that grew in the past week from 4,185 words and 53 references to 4,697 words and 82 references, has been cut to 3,208 words and 63 references.

This writer, while demanding that WP take down a cartoon of me torching PRS at the stake (a violation of WP's alleged neutrality) has been sending numerous documents and links to WP in an effort to flesh out a very sketchy portrait of the Society.

Our hope is for many more thousands of words and links to documents to be added to the PRS history. WP has been pleading for years for additions to its skimpy 290-word text on PRS (<http://tinyurl.com/9cbm8lz>).

While the cartoon of me burning PRS at the stake (<http://tinyurl.com/cv62e39>) has been removed, the section on me headlined "Controversy," has been cut from an original 695 words to 312.

A sentence in the first paragraph of the WP article says: "The Society has had a contentious relationship with journalist Jack O'Dwyer since the 1970s."

WP Swallows PRS Spin

The WP editorial tack that somehow there is a "controversy" over what we report about PRS and that we are being "contentious," is about as mistaken as anything can be.

The O'Dwyer Co. reports facts about the Society that cannot be challenged. Many of them are negative but that is not our fault. One may as well blame fires on the firefighters who arrive to put them out.

For instance, WP writes "In 1977 Jack O'Dwyer criticized the PRS after the Federal Trade Commission found that PRS's code of conduct violated anti-competition laws by requiring members not to solicit clients from other members."

Everyone criticized PRS for interfering with competition. Dragging me in as a critic is both gratuitous and unfair.

There are numerous links to publications and websites but none to O'Dwyer media. One link is to a PR News Online discussion in which PRS VP-PR Art Yann posted about me: "Phone hacking and now lying to cover it up." (<http://tinyurl.com/abpen4m>)

The author of the history, an anonymous WP editor called "Corporate Minion," shows little knowledge of many of the key events in PRS's history such as the consent decree (I told CM about that) and its nearly 40-year dominance by a small clique of "accredited" members.

PRS Dominated by APR Clique

PRS, as it closes its 65th year, finds its growth has stagnated (19,600 to 21,600 members in 14 years), its small clique of "accredited" leaders and staff have grown ever more reclusive, it is wracked with information-blocking and undemocratic practices, and it is under censure by the National Press Club, New York State Senator Liz Krueger, PR Watch and numerous individuals for interference with press coverage.

The WP entry fails to say that only those from the 18% of members who are APR have been able to run for office since the mid-1970s.

Last year's chair, Rosanna Fiske, spoke to only two of the 110 chapter memberships and there is no evidence that this year's chair, Gerry Corbett, spoke to any of them. No chair has addressed the New York chapter in more than 20 years. Transcripts of the Assembly vanished as of 2005. Rank-and-file members don't know who is in the Assembly, what they say, or how they vote.

We have compiled *O'Dwyer's Directory of PRS Abuses* (<http://tinyurl.com/9uvowzp>). These are not criticisms of PRS but descriptions of abusive practices such as failure to book dues over the course of a year, (<http://tinyurl.com/9jmxah8>) moving h.q. downtown for 15 years and killing the printed members' directory with no input from the Assembly.

Harrison, Authors, Exhibitors, Press Wasted

PRS's combative measures when confronted with competition or criticism must be highlighted in any history.

D.C. counselor Summer Harrison, having read in 1988 in major media about four PR executives meeting with CIA head Bill Casey to plot ways to win public support for the Contras in Nicaragua, publicly demanded in that PRS censure them (1972 PRS president Kal Druck, Bill Greener, PRS treasurer Ken Clark and Burson-Marsteller's Jim Bowling). Supporting the Contras was against the law. PRS's Ethics board, headed by Elias Buchwald of B-M, asked Harrison to assemble details of her charge although they were already in print in numerous places. Harrison sent her assembled facts to the press as well as the EB. She also demanded that Buchwald remove himself from the case since a co-worker was involved. Buchwald continued to send questions to Harrison. The EB exonerated the four execs and censured her twice, saying she publicly discussed the case. She did, but that was before she contacted the EB.

Copied Authors Challenged to Sue

PRS decided to fight 12 authors in court when they discovered in 1994 PRS's 18-year practice of selling copies of their articles, including entire chapters of books, in information packets. Packet volume had grown to 3,800 packets yearly by the 1990s, netting about \$60,000 according to PRS's records.

COO Ray Gaulke told the *Newsletter on Newsletters* Jan. 25, 1995 that the charges of illegal copying was a "tempest in a teapot" and that PRS would fight any charges "clear into court."

PRS was combat-ready when a group of 40+ exhibitors formed the PR Service Council in the late 1980s and pressed for better treatment at national conferences. Gaulke told PRSC in 1995 that the exhibit hall was being closed. PRSC disbanded and the exhibit hall was no re-opened until 1999. Barring O'Dwyer reporters from the 2011-2012 Assemblies and national is but the latest in a long history of harsh, legal-based policies and practices of the Society.

They are out of keeping with the charter of PRS which is to be a shepherd for the entire PR flock and be a peacemaker, not a war maker.

— Jack O'Dwyer