



**Kevin McCauley**  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's

## The Inside News of PR & Marketing Communications



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### **METROHEALTH SEEKS ID&E COUNSEL**

MetroHealth System, public health system of Ohio's Cuyahoga County, is looking for a partner to develop and implement an inclusion, diversity and equity vision strategy, according to its RFP.



The healthcare provider is building a hospital on its main campus in Cleveland that it expects will drive the revitalization of the west side neighborhood.

The company's 8,000 employees provide care at four hospitals, more than 20 health centers and 40 additional sites. In 2019, they cared for more than 300K patients, 75 percent of whom were uninsured or covered by Medicare/Medicaid.

The RFP spells out the four pillars that will guide the company towards sustainable equity.

**Patient Experience:** "Black and other minority patients do not have equivalent experiences to non-minority patients."

**Mission & Values:** "As MetroHealth works to become more diverse, we must work even harder to be more inclusive."

**HR Systems & Policies:** "MetroHealth must examine how we hire, promote and reward employees with an eye to seeing if we give micro-advantages to some and impose micro-in-equities on others based on their unique characteristics of diversity."

**The Employee Experience:** "MetroHealth will strive to have every employee feel the same sense of inclusion and belonging."

Proposals are due Aug. 13. Interested firms must register at [MetroHealth's supplier portal](#).

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#).

### **CUOMO AIDE LEVER LIKES FACEBOOK**

Dani Lever, communications director for New York governor Andrew Cuomo, is moving to Facebook's strategic communications response team.



**Dani Lever**

She joined Cuomo's team in 2014, moved up to press secretary in 2016 and CD in 2018. She previously worked for NY attorney general Eric Schneiderman and was press secretary for NYC's comptroller Bill Thompson's unsuccessful bid for mayor.

Cuomo said Lever's "dedication to public service and expertise were invaluable and her work has left a lasting impact on millions of New Yorkers."

Peter Ajemian, senior deputy communications director, will succeed Lever as CD.

### **MCDONALD'S SUES FIRED CEO**

McDonald's has sued former CEO Steve Easterbrook, claiming he "concealed evidence and lied" about his alleged sexual relationships with three employees before it fired him for "engaging in an inappropriate relationship" with another staffer, according to the fast-feeder's Aug. 10 Securities and Exchange Commission filing.

In firing Easterbrook on Nov. 1, the board negotiated a separation agreement that said the termination was "without cause," entitling Easterbrook to severance benefits. McDonald's says it recently learned that Easterbrook allegedly had physical sexual relationships with three other workers a year before it fired him and that he "approved an extraordinary stock grant, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, for one of those employees."

The company says if Easterbrook had been candid about those relationships, it would not have terminated him "without cause." Accordingly, "McDonald's brings this action to redress the injuries it has suffered by virtue of Easterbrook's fiduciary breaches and deceit," says the SEC filing.



**Steve Easterbrook**

### **EDELMAN RISES TO KODAK'S DEFENSE**

Edelman is helping Rochester-based Kodak deal with the PR crisis triggered by its internal communications team sending out a media advisory without an embargo time about the following-day announcement of a \$765M loan from the US to launch Kodak Pharmaceuticals.

Rochester's CBS and ABC affiliates posted stories on their websites on July 27 about Kodak's COVID-19 initiative with the Trump Administration, which sent the price of the company sharply upward. They removed the stories after Kodak informed them the information was for background only.

Senator Elizabeth Warren wants Securities and Exchange Commission chairman Jay Clayton to investigate potential insider trading by Kodak executive chairman Jim Continenza and board member Phillippe Katz.

She noted that reports indicate the unusual trading in Kodak's stock may have been triggered by its sharing non-public information with news outlets on a non-embargoed basis.

If that's the case, Warren wants to know why Kodak failed to inform the SEC of the inadvertent disclosure.

An Edelman spokesperson said Kodak's PR team did not intend for the news to be published. The U.S. has put the loan on hold until any allegations of wrongdoing are cleared.

## **ERIE COUNTY SEEKS COVID-19 PR PARTNER**

The Erie County Dept. of Health plans to hire a PR firm to build awareness of how to slow the spread of COVID-19 and to highlight the initiatives that it has taken to keep people safe from the virus.



The firm will develop a PR plan aimed at the media and public, developing story angles and pitching stories about the Pennsylvania county's COVID-19 efforts.

The desired partner will "serve as the primary point of contact managing reactive media inquiries," according to the RFP.

The firm also will conduct market research and develop a PR push at "underserved populations" in Erie.

It will "create a campaign with diverse imaging to meet the needs of peer groups based on market research, focusing on messaging that is representative of each subgroup and appeals to their specific values," says the RFP.

Responses are due Aug. 20. They must be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled "PR Firm for Health Equitable Messaging to Erie County About COVID-19" and hand-delivered or mailed to: Office of the County Controller; Erie County Courthouse; 140 West 6th St., Room #107; Erie, PA 16501

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## **BRUNSWICK DRIVES SPEEDWAY DEAL**

Brunswick Group is handling 7-Eleven's \$21B cash acquisition of the Speedway convenience store chain of Marathon Petroleum.

The addition of 3,900 Speedway units will bolster 7-Eleven's US and Canada network to about 14,000 stores. 7-Eleven will strengthen its position on the East Coast and Midwest and have a presence in 47 of the top 50 American markets.

7-Eleven, a unit of Japan's Seven and i Holdings, operates, franchises and/or licenses more than 70,000 convenience stores in 17 countries.

Jonathan Doorley, head of Brunswick's US M&A team, leads the deal team from New York. He's supported by NYC partner Charlie Koons, director Kate Beers and Tokyo's Dai-suke Tsuchiya, who heads the firm's Japan practice.

## **REGIONS BANKS ON HOME DEPOT'S DRAKE**

Paula Drake has joined Birmingham's Regions Bank as executive VP & chief communications officer, a new position at the \$144B (assets) institution.



**Paula Drake**

Responsible for corporate communications, marketing PR, content publishing and video production, Drake reports to chief human resources officer Dave Kennan.

The 23-year PR veteran joins Regions from Home Depot, where she was corporate and executive communications director. Drake also was PR manager at UPS, account executive at Duffey Communications and media specialist for Florida's attorney general office.

Regions has about 1,400 banks in across the South, Texas and Midwest.

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

**APCO Worldwide** has entered into a critical event management brand reputation and crisis management partnership with global CEM company **Everbridge**. The alliance offers APCO and its clients the opportunity to tap into Everbridge's established data system to raise awareness about various potential threats endangering clients—including natural disasters, cybersecurity incidents, terrorist attacks and others. The Everbridge platform reaches over 550 million people through public warning system deployments in countries around the world, as well as in municipalities, counties and cities within 49 U.S. states and all of Canada's provinces.



**Durée & Company** has launched **CannabisMarketingPR.com**, a cannabis- and hemp-focused website. In addition to providing visitors with information about Durée & Company's services in PR and marketing, crisis prevention, digital and affiliate marketing, and influencer relations, the site features blogs about the cannabis and hemp/CBD industries. The agency has been working with full spectrum hemp and CBD brands, processing facilities, trade associations, dispensary owners, farmers, growers, cannabis cultivators, third-party laboratories and other startups.

**Trysail Strategies**, a crisis communication, issues management and public affairs strategy firm, has been launched by Adam Croglia, who was previously a senior counselor at Mower. The agency, with offices in Buffalo, Albany and Washington, DC, provides such services as grassroots outreach, coalition building, executive positioning and speechwriting. Trysail is also offering free services to small businesses in Western New York that are working to engage customers, audiences and stakeholders as they reopen.

**Qorvis Communications**, a Washington, DC-based strategic communications agency with a client roster that includes Saudi Arabia, CDC, the British Embassy and AAMCO, will celebrate its 20th anniversary on Aug. 10. Founded by Michael Petruzzello in 2000, the firm became part of the Publicis Groupe in 2014. It provides clients with services including issue advocacy, crisis & issue management, media training and research & polling.

**United Minds, a Weber Shandwick consultancy**, has launched (Re) Boot Camp, a "re-onboarding"



program that employs virtual events, workplace walkthroughs and customized training modules to prepare an organization's team for the new ways of working made necessary by the COVID-19 pandemic. "(Re)Boot Camp helps employees more easily absorb all of the upcoming change and make the critical pivot from the past to the future," said United Minds executive vice president Sarah Clayton.

**Propulsion PR** has launched a vegan/plant-based team, intended to align with the firm's commitment to representing businesses that work to reduce environmental risks and aim for sustainable growth. PR services that Propulsion will offer to vegan clients include messaging and positioning, media relations, initial public offering media strategy, market expansion and visibility campaigns, content creation, sponsorships and partnerships, event planning, digital media, thought leadership and speaking opportunities. Propulsion says the launch is in response to a continuing plant-based food boom.



## **BUILDING CONFIDENCE AMID THE PANDEMIC**

With COVID-19 causing unprecedented disruption to the U.S. and world economies, many financial services firms have had to make the difficult decision to lay off or furlough workers. In the case of furloughs, employers have often com-



**Alex Stanton**

municated that they hope and expect to hire employees back as soon as they're able. In this situation, maintaining clear and consistent communication is crucial not just to build internal confidence but to manage reputation more broadly.

Retaining employees you've trained and cultivated is in a firm's best interest. Research suggests direct replacement costs can reach as high as 50-60 percent of an employee's annual salary, with total costs associated with turnover ranging from 90-200 percent of annual salary. However, keeping employees aboard can be a challenge today as attitudes have surely shifted, loyalty is fleeting and customers and the revenue they provide have been significantly impacted.

### **Accelerate pace of communication**

A key step is to increase communications frequency with both retained and furloughed employees. All employees hold a direct stake in the success of the firm. They can be your greatest advocates through these turbulent times—but only if they feel the company is keeping them informed.

This means more frequent communication—even when circumstances haven't changed—and being prepared to field questions about uncomfortable issues. Build a reasonable schedule and stick to it so employees know when they'll hear from you. This forces management to prioritize this activity.

With furloughed workers, maintain open avenues of two-way communication and offer good news when possible to keep them interested in returning to the workforce and staying engaged with the company. When sharing positive news, be conscious of tone and context. This is a difficult time for many and you don't want to appear celebratory when employees are struggling and the path forward is uncertain.

### **Finding an authentic voice**

If the company had to undergo more than one round of furloughs, and you're bringing people back in phases, it's important to be sensitive to how different groups may feel about their value and place in the company. Clearly explain and reiterate why actions need to be taken.

The approach isn't much different for retained employees. Knowing that your furloughed team members are likely in touch with colleagues and friends who've remained on the job, it's critical that the messaging remain consistent.

Businesses usually confront legal restrictions in formal communications with furloughed employees, with their access to channels like Slack or Teams similarly restricted. A dedicated and up-to-date virtual space these workers can access to stay informed is an important step in this process.

Putting a human face on your communications is vital. Consider, for example, a bi-weekly video recording or fire-side podcast. It's one thing to read about managing through difficult business conditions in a pandemic, and quite another to see and hear leadership explain it with conviction.

### **Cultivating employee ambassadors**

Leadership should also identify and connect with employee ambassadors to determine the optimal way to reach all segments of the workforce, including those on furlough. The

goal is to create a reliable process and vehicles for providing continual updates and collecting feedback.

Though social media may feel like a natural avenue to employ to maintain these connections, it also comes with pitfalls. By design, social media is open and shareable and thus open to greater scrutiny. It's important to create a secure space where conversation can happen and messages are less likely to be misconstrued.

### **Are you ready for the 'new normal'?**

While there's hope we may soon be on the decline curve of this pandemic, now's the time to plan what "normal" will look like for your workplace and how communications practices need to evolve. You shouldn't assume that once there's a green light to return to the workplace that communication can be de-prioritized or become less frequent.

For many businesses, the right move will be to put forth a plan, but also to seek employee input so you can respond to concerns and make the necessary adjustments.

The pandemic is unprecedented and there's no one right approach. However, smart financial firms are rethinking how they engage with employees and how communications can create and maintain strong, lasting bonds. We're truly all in this together.

*Alex Stanton is CEO of Stanton.*

## **DIGITAL TOPS PRINT AT THE NEW YORK TIMES**

The New York Times Company says that its digital revenue exceeded print revenue for the first time ever during the second quarter. The company reports that it brought in \$185.5 million in revenue from digital subscriptions and ads in Q2, compared to \$175.4 million on the print side.

While total revenue at the NYT fell 7.5 percent, print took a much harder hit. Digital ad revenue saw a 32 percent drop, while print revenue was down by 55 percent. Overall ad revenue slid 44 percent from Q2 2019, going from \$120.8 million to \$67.8 million.

Digital subscriptions were up by 669,000, bringing the company's total digital-subscription count to 5.7 million. Subscriptions from print-based bundles totaled just 800,000.

The company will need healthy circulation numbers to keep it moving forward in what the company acknowledges is an increasingly difficult time for advertising. It predicts that overall ad revenue will see a 35 to 40 percent drop in the third quarter from Q3 2019, with even digital ad revenue expected to drop by 20 percent.

## **HILTON'S RICHARDSON CHECKS IN AT GPG**

Glover Park Group has hired Andréa Richardson as a senior vice president. Richardson comes to GPG from Hilton, where she was the senior director of multicultural & diversity engagement for the company's corporate communications and global affairs team.

In her new position, she will work in GPG's strategic communications division, providing crisis, strategic and corporate communications counsel.

"Andréa's deep expertise in marketing, crisis and policy communications, and diversity & inclusion initiatives makes her a powerful addition to the GPG team," said Jennifer Loven, managing director and head of GPG's strategic communications division.



**Andréa Richardson**

## **N. CAROLINA FISHES FOR SUSTAINABLE PR**

The North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission is accepting PR proposals for its 2021 program to educate the public on the state's sustainable commercial fishing industry and the progress that it has made to lessen its impact on the environment.



The RFP calls NC's fishery resources economically and socially important to many of the state's residents, visitors and coastal communities because they provide a source of employment, income, recreation and food.

The Commission wants a broad-based PR approach "to include developing educational clinics, media promotions (print, video, web, social media, radio, etc.), displays for festivals, promotional items for fishing related events, and assistance in marketing North Carolina's seafood as sustainable."

It requests proposals for a two-year period, with the work and budget broken down by Year 1 and Year 2.

Program costs are not to exceed \$400K per-year.

Proposals are due electronically on Aug. 17. They go to [William.Brantley@ncdenr.gov](mailto:William.Brantley@ncdenr.gov).

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## **BALTIMORE MAYOR SPOKESPERSON TO SKDK**

Lester Davis, chief spokesperson for Baltimore Mayor Bernard "Jack" Young, is joining SKDKnickerbocker next month as VP-public affairs in DC.



**Lester Davis**

That move follows Young's defeat in the June primary. He took over the mayor's job following the resignation of Catherine Pugh in 2019 amid the scandal over her sales of a self-published children's book series.

Davis worked with Young for more than a decade, which included his time as city council president.

Earlier, he was director of communications at HDSF, director of development at CORE Philly and a reporter at the *Palm Beach Post*.

## **FTI WORKS TAILORED BRANDS BANKRUPTCY**

FTI Consulting is handling communications for the bankruptcy filing of Tailored Brands, parent company of Men's Warehouse, Jos A. Bank, Moore's Clothing for Men and K&G Fashion Superstore retail chains, a move that will cut debt by at least \$630M.

The filing follows last month's decision to close up to 500 stores, cut corporate headcount 20 percent and recruit Holly Etlin, managing director at AlixPartners, as chief restructuring officer with the departure of CFO Jack Calandra.

CEO Dinesh Lathi said though Tailored Brands made significant progress in strengthening its operations, the "unprecedented impact of COVID-19 requires us to further adapt and evolve."

The Chapter 11 filing marks "a critical milestone toward our goal of becoming a strong company that has the financial and operational flexibility to compete and win in the rapidly evolving retail environment," said Lathi.

FTI's Stephanie Randall works the Tailored Brands account.

## **NEWS CORP. Q4 REVENUES DROP 22%**

News Corp. CEO Robert Thomson reports a 22 percent decline in Q4 revenues (ended June) to \$1.9B and a \$401M net loss, compared to a \$42M deficit a year ago. The owner of the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Sun*, *Times of London* and Australian newspapers estimates the COVID-19 pandemic cut revenues by \$330M during the period.

News Corp reported full-year revenues of \$9B, off 11 percent from last year. The \$1.6B in red ink compares to \$228M profit in 2019.

WSJ subscriptions jumped 15 percent to nearly 3M during the quarter.

Digital-only subs advanced 23 percent to 2.2M, representing 75 percent of total subscriptions.

Ad revenues dipped 28 percent to 28M, largely due to a 43 percent drop in print ad revenues. Digital took a 7 percent hit.

Thomson said News Corp took action to cut costs during the quarter and launched a shared services program, which will have a "materially positive impact" on the bottom line.



**Robert Thomson**

## **SEVEN LETTER PROMOTES JAPAN TOURISM**

The Embassy of Japan has hired Seven Letter for media outreach and a digital advertising campaign to promote tourism and raise public awareness of the country's health initiatives to counter the COVID-19 pandemic.

Japan has fared much better than other nations in containing COVID-19, though infections are on the rise, according to the Aug. 5 *Japan Times*.

Despite an aging population, Japan has registered a low death rate from the virus. Johns Hopkins University reports Japan has a 0.8 ratio of deaths per 100K population from the virus, compared to 65.7 in the UK and 38.6 in the US.

The country has more than 46K confirmed COVID-19 cases and 1,028 deaths.

Seven Letter's contract with Japan began Aug 1 and runs through February. It receives a \$40K monthly retainer for the effort, along with a \$200K budget for four two-week digital ad campaigns.

## **PUBLICIS AXES GOODWIN FOR COVID TWEETS**

Publicis Groupe has fired Tom Goodwin, who took the head of futures and insight post earlier this year, following his controversial tweets about the COVID-19 pandemic and exchanges with other ad people.

Goodwin tweeted Aug. 2 "that he found the "the total obsession with Covid deaths over all other deaths entirely gruesome." He noted that "7,500 Americans die every day but only the ones with this precise new Virus matter."

Goodwin's tweets generated a fierce backlash on Twitter though many people defended his right to express his personal beliefs about the virus.

Publicis released this statement:

"These posts and exchanges by Tom Goodwin this week on social media do not meet the standard of conduct we expect of our company's employees and were not aligned with our values. Publicis and Tom have parted ways."



**Tom Goodwin**



## **RANCHO MIRAGE RELEASES BRANDING RFP**

Rancho Mirage, California is seeking proposals from agencies that can provide marketing, branding, campaign development and strategic planning services.

Scope of the work includes: research; developing identity and campaign concepts; production of a brand toolkit and style guide; creation of a four-year strategic marketing, communications and events plan; and creation of a fully-developed brand campaign.

Proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. (PST) on August 31. Proposals should be delivered to:

City of Rancho Mirage; Attn: Gabe Coddington, Marketing Director and Hayley Tice, Marketing & Events Specialist; 69825 Highway 111; Rancho Mirage, California 92270

Bidding agencies should submit one original and three copies of their proposals in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Sealed bid for marketing, branding, campaign development and strategic planning services—do not open with regular mail." Questions should be directed to Hayley Tice, Marketing & Events Specialist, [hayleyt@ranchomirageca.gov](mailto:hayleyt@ranchomirageca.gov), by Mon., August 17.

[Download the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

## **TRESEDER RIDES WITH PELOTON**

Interactive fitness platform Peloton has named Dara Treseder senior vice president, head of global marketing and communications, effective Aug. 18.



**Dara Treseder**

Treseder comes to Peloton from information technology company Carbon, where she was chief marketing officer. Previously, she worked at GE as chief marketing officer of GE Business Innovations and GE Ventures, and at Apple as global head of demand generation for FileMaker.

In her new position, Treseder will oversee brand marketing, consumer insights, communications and creative. "Dara exemplifies the traits we look for

in leaders here, and she has the kind of collaborative spirit that we value so much at Peloton," said Peloton president William Lynch.

## **GAGNIER, PRINCIPAL COMMS. WORK XFL DEAL**

Gagnier Communications and Principal Communications Group represent RedBird Capital Partners as it teams with Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and his business partner Dany Garcia to buy the bankrupt XFL for \$15M.

Founded by Goldman Sachs partner Gerry Cardinale, RedBird manages \$4B in capital across verticals in sports, TMT, financial services and consumer products.

Cardinale helped create the YES Network with the New York Yankees; Legends Hospitality with the Yankees and Dallas Cowboys; On Location Experiences with the NFL, and Suddenlink Communications, which was the No. 7 cable TV company when it was acquired by France's Altice.

The XFL declared Chapter 11 in April and was scheduled to go into auction on Aug. 7. President Jeffrey Pollack called the deal "a Hollywood ending" to our sale process.

Dan Gagnier and PCG's Melissa Zukerman and Paul Pflug handle RedBird. Hiltzik Strategies' Matthew Hiltzik and Jeremy Watkins represent the XFL's parent Alpha Entertainment.

## **CUNA APPOINTS JEFFERSON CCO**

Credit Union National Association has appointed Deshundra Jefferson as chief communications officer. Jefferson served as traveling press secretary for the presidential campaign of former Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick.

She was previously a principal at The Raben Group, a director at kglobal and Southern regional communications director for the Democratic National Committee.

At CUNA, Jefferson will be responsible for developing and implementing strategies to communicate the value of credit unions to policymakers, the media, and consumers. "Deshundra's skillset spans across many critical areas of communications that we plan to leverage," CUNA Chief Engagement Officer Greg Michlig said.



**Deshundra Jefferson**

## **FOCUS BRANDS PICKS OUT BCW'S DAWN RAY**

Focus Brands, parent company of such brands as Carvel, Cinnabon and Schlotzsky's, has brought on Dawn Ray as senior vice president of corporate communications. Ray comes to Focus from BCW, where was a senior vice president, based in the agency's Memphis office.

She has also served as vice president, corporate communications at EdR Collegiate Housing and director, trade and development public relations at Hilton.

At Focus, Ray will lead strategic corporate communications and build trade public relations and communications for franchise sales. "Dawn's business acumen and leadership in communications and public relations for some of the world's most well-known brands will be an asset to the company," said Focus Brands CEO Jim Holthouser.



**Dawn Ray**

## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

**Champion Management Group** has been named public relations agency of record for **JINYA Ramen Bar**. Champion's scope of work for the client includes consumer and franchise-development public relations, local store marketing and new restaurant openings. The agency will also provide brand support through targeted local marketing campaigns as well as generating coverage at the local and national level.

**CRC, Inc.** (Cindy Riccio Communications) has been selected as agency of record to help launch **The Avant Guard**, a sustainable fashion mask brand for men and women, in the US. The launch and PR program is in partnership with London-based Task PR, which will handle the brand's debut in the UK. The Avant Guard pledges to donate \$2 from the sale of each mask to Doctors without Borders.

**Otto & Friends** is PR & social agency for **Lordstown Motors**, which is introducing an all-electric pick-up truck, the Endurance. Lordstown, which announced that it was going public on Aug. 3, recently released a video showing the truck at work. When Lordstown launched in November 2019, they said they planned to build 20,000 Endurance trucks in 2021. They now say that they have received preorders and letters of intent that fulfill that goal.

# COMMENTARY

**Make them an offer they can't refuse.** Donald Trump extorts China's ByteDance into selling the TikTok app to Microsoft by Sept. 15, or else he threatens to shut it down in the US.



Zhang Yiming, ByteDance CEO and founder of TikTok, told employees he had no choice but to comply with Trump's demands to sell the app.

The Don then upped the ante, saying the US deserves a piece of the action.

"The US should get a very large percentage of that price, because we're making it possible," said Trump. "It would come from the sale, which nobody else would be thinking about but me, but that's the way I think."

The president got that right. Nobody thinks the US government should get involved in shaking down private companies.

And who is going to fork over the cash? Microsoft or TikTok? And where does the money go? The US Treasury or Trump Organization?

Eric Lutz of *Vanity Fair* believes the TikTok move is an example of Trump's transactional approach, one "that feels more mafia-like than business-like, akin to the oil he wanted to keep as a souvenir for America's Middle East adventures."

The Chinese media have attacked Trump for the attempted "smash and grab" of TikTok.

Trump's TikTok shakedown adds to the tensions between the US and China.

He will step up his China bashing as Election Day draws near. With the COVID-19 pandemic and economic collapse, Trump views the China card as part of a winning hand.

**Trump is a failed US president because he thinks** the essence of the job is public relations rather than being the CEO of the federal government, according to CNN analyst Fareed Zakaria.

The tweeter-in-chief never understood the core managerial role of the president, which is why the COVID-19 outbreak turned into a catastrophe.

The US Constitution purposely limited the power of the presidency vis-à-vis other governments.

That means that the president in times of crisis must gain support from federal agencies, members of Congress, governors, foreign leaders, media, private sector interests and the public to get things done.

During a national emergency, there must be a heroic exertion of presidential power. The president must take charge, mobilize governmental resources and coordinate agencies.

Trump did none of that.

As the US death toll from COVID-19 crossed the 153,000 mark, the president logged his 283rd golfing trip of his term.

He visited the Trump National Golf Club in Sterling, VA, on Aug. 1 as Congress and White House negotiators failed to iron out a COVID-19 relief package.

Rather than serving as federal CEO, Trump throws out half-baked ideas (e.g., travel ban, quack COVID-19 remedies, delaying the election) that immediately trigger chaos but then gets slapped down by the courts, Congress or even

sometimes walked back by Trump.

He wages war on his own people, such as Deborah Birx, the doctor who oversees the White House's coronavirus response, after she warned of a new phase of the virus.

She told CNN on Aug. 2 that new outbreaks are "extraordinarily widespread" and said the death toll could hit 300K by the end of the year.

Trump tweeted Aug 3 that Birx's statement was pathetic and accused her of taking marching orders from Nancy Pelosi. After all, COVID-19 is just going to disappear.

Zakaria said Trump's "reality TV show" White House is no substitute for sustainable progress against COVID-19.

Rallies, tweets and magical thinking are not going to solve the national healthcare crisis.

**While Trump cannot fulfill his promise that COVID-19** is going to "just disappear" and "sooner rather than later," he can make vanish a weekly report card on how the virus is ruining the lives of millions of Americans.

The Census Bureau is killing its "household pulse survey," a 20-minute online questionnaire on how the disease is impacting households across the country. The survey asks about jobs, finances, access to food, health, housing, and schooling to gauge the ongoing crisis.

It was launched in April to "quickly and efficiently deploy data collected on how people's lives have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic."

The survey last month found that 29M Americans do not have enough food, 28M are depressed and 44M-plus reported being nervous, anxious or on edge nearly every day.

Those results don't fit very well into the president's re-election narrative.

**Corporate PR people dealing with environmental issues** are getting it done, according to a survey from the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

It found that the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today* favor business interests over green groups in their reporting of climate change.

The survey analyzed 1,768 press releases from business, government and environmental advocacy groups from 1985 to 2014 and nearly 35K articles on climate action.

Rachel Wetts, a sociologist at Brown University and author of the survey, found that press releases opposing climate action, which made up 10 percent of the releases studied, got twice as much play in the press as those proposing action.

The largest corporations and business organizations did best.

Wetts was surprised that press releases from organizations providing scientific and technical services are less likely to receive news coverage than other releases in the study, suggesting that messages from organizations with greater scientific expertise get less media attention.

She told *Popular Science* that she anticipated that scientists with well-informed legitimate opinions would earn more coverage than less legitimate and authoritative sources.

Wetts doesn't appreciate the power of PR.

—Kevin McCauley