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TECH SLUMP HITS WPP

WPP CEO Mark Read slashed the firm's 2023 growth forecast from the 3 percent to 5 percent range down to 1.5 percent to 3 percent as the US technology slump took its toll on 1H revenues.



Mark Read

Technology revenues, which account for 18 percent of WPP's sales, slipped 4.9 percent during the 1H. WPP counts Google, Meta and Microsoft as clients.

That lackluster tech performance held WPP's overall revenue growth to 3.5 percent, hitting \$9.6B.

Read said the financial results were "resilient with Q2 growth accelerating in all regions except the USA, which was impacted in

the second quarter by lower spending from technology clients and some delays in technology-related projects."

The US, which generates 37 percent of WPP's business, posted a 4.5 percent fall in 2Q revenues after a 2.3 percent 1Q gain. WPP'S PR group recorded 2.1 percent growth in 1H revenues to \$748M.

Hill+Knowlton Strategies and [FGS Global](#) posted strong results, while BCW recorded a slight dip in revenues.

EDELMAN CRISIS CHIEF TO REAL CHEMISTRY

[Real Chemistry](#) has recruited [Edelman](#) US crisis & risk chair Steve Behm as practice leader of its crisis communications and corporate reputation practice.

Based in Atlanta, Behm has expertise in communications, preparedness planning, cyber-security and immediate response.

The healthcare firm also hired Brian Tjugum, a 30-year PR veteran, as global practice leader, social impact.

He spent 13 years at Weber Shandwick's London office in two stints, exiting as executive VP, health & social impact.



Steve Behm

Tjugum, who most recently ran his own firm, also worked at Ogilvy PR Worldwide for six years.

The firm also launched Real Reputation, which taps into online signals and insights from curated healthcare panels and real-world data to measure reputation.

Real Chemistry, which ranks as [O'Dwyer's No. 1 ranked healthcare firm](#), recorded \$555M in 2022 fee income.

RAVAGED ETHIOPIA REACHES FOR APCO

APCO Worldwide has inked an open-ended contract to provide strategic communications and media relations services to Ethiopia, Africa's second most populous country with 121M people, which has been ravaged by war and drought.

Ethiopia was the site of the world's bloodiest war last year, according to Comfort Ero, head of the Crisis Group.

Ethiopia also is battling a long-term drought that puts 28M of its people at risk.

The International Rescue Committee ranks Ethiopia as the country, after Somalia, most at risk of a worsening humanitarian crisis in 2023.

APCO's job is to further the Government of Ethiopia's commitments to its citizens and international partners "to build a just, prosperous and stable nation," according to its contract inked on July 27.

The DC firm also will promote Ethiopia as a destination for foreign direct investment. It will receive a monthly fee of \$158,537 under the agreement that "shall continue indefinitely."

Margery Kraus, APCO founder & executive chairman, and Seleshi Bekele Awulachew, Ethiopia's US ambassador, signed the master engagement agreement.

APCO has a seven-member team assigned to the Ethiopia account.



NEW JERSEY GATHERS QUOTES FOR PR WORK

New Jersey is accepting quotes for PR, marketing, advertising and community outreach work.

It plans to award contracts to those responsible bidders whose quotes "are most advantageous to the State, price and other factors considered," according to the RFQ.

Selected firms will compete in a "mini-bid" process for upcoming communications assignments.

The Garden State does not guarantee any volume of work.

The PR contract would cover content development, media relations, events, crisis management, and social media activity.

Proposals are due August 9 at the [NJStart e-procurement site](#).

[Read the RFQ \(PDF\)](#).



PUERTO RICO POSTS TRAVEL PR RFP

Puerto Rico is requesting proposals from public relations agencies that can promote the island's tourism offerings.



Discover Puerto Rico, the official destination marketing organization charged with promoting travel to the island, is looking for an agency partner that can elevate the Discover Puerto Rico brand.

Scope of work includes: maintaining crisis management plans and protecting brand reputation; identifying and leveraging industry and market-specific trends to generate coverage; and generating publicity representing Puerto Rico and securing broadcast opportunities for Discover Puerto Rico's key programs and initiatives.

Work is expected to begin on December 1st, 2023.

Proposals, due by 5:00 p.m. (AST) on August 11, should be mailed to: Xiomara Rodriguez; Chief Marketing Officer; Discover Puerto Rico; 500 Calle De La Tanca; Building Ochoa, Suite 402B; San Juan, PR 00901 USA.

Bidding agencies must include 10 hard copies of their proposals, and submit an electronic copy of their proposals to communications@discoverpuertorico.com by 5:00 p.m. (AST) on Friday, August 11. Questions should be directed to communications@discoverpuertorico.com.

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

SEXTON EXITS PRUDENTIAL FINANCIAL

Alan Sexton, SVP and CCO at Prudential Financial, has left nearly six years for Balyasny Asset Management.



Alan Sexton

He takes on managing director & head of corporate communications duties at Balyasny, which has more than 1,000 investment pros located in financial centers globally.

Dmitry Balyasny, Taylor O'Malley and Scott Schroeder founded BAM in Chicago in 2001.

Sexton looks forward to telling the story of a young and ambitious organization that is not yet as well-known as it should be.

Prior to Prudential, Sexton was chair of Burson Marsteller's corporate & financial practice, EVP at Global Strategy Group, and EVP & NYC PA director at Ogilvy.

WAPO NAMES PETERSEN VP-PR

Olivia Petersen, head of communications at Morning Consult, will join the *Washington Post* next month as VP-PR.



Olivia Petersen

She will work to drive publicity across the newsroom, engineering and business teams; overseeing media relations; and providing strategic communications counsel.

Petersen will report to Kathy Baird, chief communications officer.

Prior to Morning Consult, Petersen was global director-corporate communications at Whole Foods, senior director of communications at NBC News and PR director at *Politico*.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

MMGY Global checks in at Hawaii's **Turtle Bay Resort**. MMGY Wagstaff will handle all public relations services while MMGY will oversee account management, social media, influencer relations and paid media. Located on the North Shore of Oahu, Turtle Bay Resort recently celebrated its 50th anniversary and has unveiled a property transformation inspired by its commitment to preserving the area's culture and land through sustainable initiatives. "MMGY Global shares our dedication to delivering extraordinary experiences," said Turtle Bay Resort chief commercial officer Robert Marusi.

5W Public Relations, in collaboration with its digital marketing agency HOW, picks up US PR and digital AOR duties for Royal Air Maroc, the national airline of Morocco. 5WPR's program will analyze and identify trends, travel patterns and preferences of potential travelers in major U.S. cities to create campaigns and initiatives that resonate with their interests and aspirations. HOW will work on Royal Air Maroc's paid media program in the US, as well as developing social media content.

William Mills Agency, which specializes in financial industry clients, is engaged to provide public relations services to **Mbanq**, a global banking-as-a-service and credit union-as-a-service provider. Mbanq's cloud-based or on-site back-end technology connects to global financial infrastructure, offering responsive white label mobile apps for bank customers, customer-branded credit and debit cards and a fully managed US bank license sponsor.

Crowe PR signs to execute public relations and social media influencer marketing strategies for **Infantino**, a global baby and parenting lifestyle brand. Crowe PR will promote the company's intentionally designed, safe and innovative products through targeted media and influencer relations, messaging refinement and thought leadership. Infantino's products are available globally, having a large presence in major retailers including Amazon, Target and Walmart as well as various specialty toy stores, discount retailers and e-commerce sites.

Marketing Maven is selected to handle the worldwide speaking engagements of Set The Expectation founder and victims' rights advocate and survivor **Brenda Tracy**. STE is an organization dedicated to ending sexual and interpersonal violence through prevention work with men, advocacy and engagement with agencies serving survivors and their families. Marketing Maven CEO Lindsey Carnett "has the right connections for me to spread my message of perseverance and hope widely and proactively," said Tracy.

Raptor PR, a B2B tech PR agency for the video games industry, adds **Zibra AI**, a deep tech startup based in Kyiv, Ukraine, to its portfolio of emerging technology brands. Raptor PR will craft Zibra AI's global communications architecture, including a creative campaign narrative intended to harness the talent and technology behind the company, as well as bringing its human story to global business and technology audiences. Zibra AI is empowered by a proprietary machine learning technology, transforming the ways in which video game and VR/AR creators, developers and publishers create complex 3D visual effects and assets for all virtual worlds.



TURTLE BAY



REVISITING THE CHATBOT

Artificial Intelligence has dominated the tech news cycle for the past few months, and that trend shows no signs of letting up. Although [OpenAI](#) and its ChatGPT product have



Henry Feintuch

vaulted it front and center, our clients have been using it for years behind the scenes to cut costs and improve service.

Fintech is a great example of a vertical that has benefited enormously from AI technology and not for the reasons you may have thought. AI in fintech has nothing to do with financial products themselves—it has to do with customer service. Specifically, chatbots.

I can see your eyes rolling.

Chatbots have a bad reputation, because our collective memories are filled with stories involving bad chatbots. However, if it's a choice of waiting 10 minutes for an actual person or having my exact question—which I do realize may not be specific to me—answered in 10 seconds by a well-created chatbot, give me the bot every time. So, what's changed?

Early chatbots were clumsy and ineffective—and annoying!—because they relied on rule-based systems that were limited in their ability to understand natural language. That is to say, the bots looked for, and responded to, specific keywords or phrases and they the rest of the language in the conversation. They couldn't understand the context of a conversation.

Maybe that's why your eyes were rolling.

Thanks to advances in AI and machine learning, chatbots have become much more sophisticated. Modern chatbots use Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning algorithms to understand natural language and learn from previous interactions with customers. What's NLP and how does it work? Let's let AI tell us (from Bing search).

“NLP is a branch of AI that focuses on the interaction between computers and humans using natural language. NLP enables computers to understand, interpret and generate human language. It works by breaking down human language into its component parts such as words and phrases. It then uses algorithms to analyze these parts and understand their meaning in context.”

This process has enabled chatbots to provide personalized and efficient support while reducing costs for financial institutions. AI helps the financial industry streamline and optimize processes ranging from credit decisions to quantitative trading and financial risk management.

JP Morgan Chase, for example, has been using machine learning algorithms to analyze legal documents, reducing the time it takes to review them by 360,000 hours per year. That's 41 years of legal work! Goldman Sachs has been using machine learning algorithms to improve its trading strategies.

AI has also significantly boosted fintech by enhancing security; it has the ability to comb through large amounts of data and find potential security threats. Banks can protect their customers from fraud and reduce operational costs.

Another aspect of AI's effect on the financial industry: personalization. This is a top priority for financial institutions as it can reduce acquisition costs by as much as 50 percent, lift revenues by 5 to 15 percent, and increase the efficiency of marketing spend by 10 to 30 percent (McKinsey). A Capco study found that 72 percent of customers now rate personalization as

“highly important” in today's financial services landscape.

Think about the way that Amazon suggests purchases for you that make perfect sense based on past purchases and your browsing behavior. These same principles can be applied to financial products. Providing you with options for financial products takes some of the burden off of your research and can often be an opportunity for an easy sale. It's all about making the experience easy, comfortable and intuitive.

Here's an excerpt, published in November '22, from the Genesys report “The Challenge of Customer-Centric Banking”:

“61 percent of banking executives say expectations for customer experience are continuing to rise, and nearly half (45 percent) admit they are struggling to keep up. But in today's experience economy, banks can't risk missing those expectations. From attracting and retaining both customers and employees to increasing brand reputation, to meeting financial goals, banks getting customer experience right are outpacing their competitors, proving that when it comes to people and business results, experience matters.”

Where do PR practitioners fit into this? They have a responsibility to understand how companies and clients are using or planning to use AI and find ways to communicate the benefits to all stakeholders, from consumers to trade audiences to employees and shareholders. Like all other aspects of fintech, you can't communicate features, benefits and the why unless you get it. We need to be the AI thought leaders—not the chatbots—and lead the way.

Henry Feintuch is President of Feintuch Communications, Treasurer of the PR World Alliance and past President of PRSA-NY.

CALIF. COUNTY NEEDS TOURISM MARKETING

Butte County, California, is seeking proposals from agencies specializing in marketing and media buying services.

The county is about 75 minutes northeast of the state capital of Sacramento, with a population of about 212,000.

Explore Butte County, the destination marketing and management organization for Butte County, is looking for an agency partner experienced in tourism and/or destination marketing to build on and enhance the county's brand through marketing programs that drive overnight visitations and position the county as a premier tourism destination.



Scope of work includes developing and executing a three-year marketing strategy; providing creative services related to the conception, design and execution of advertising campaigns and programs; media buying; and research. EBC is also interested in the possibility of enlisting the hired agency to create a tagline and/or brand promise.

Terms of the contract run from October 1, 2023, to November 30, 2024, with the option of five one-year extensions.

Proposals are due by 5 p.m. (PST) on August 15 and should be sent to: Explore Butte County; 326 Huss Dr.; P.O. Box 2154; Chico, CA 95927; Attention: Nichole Farley, Executive Director

All bidding agencies must include one (unbound) original and seven copies of their proposals, as well as an electronic copy in searchable and printable PDF format.

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

FTI LANDS \$1M PACT FROM DUBAI

Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing has hired [FTI Consulting](#) to generate greater awareness of Dubai's economic ecosystem. FTI is to promote Dubai's business and investment offerings, talent attractiveness and livability proposition.



The two-year contract carries a monthly retainer of \$83,333, with an option to renew for an extra one-year period. The retainer is capped at the \$1M annual mark.

Cory Fritz, managing director in FTI's strategic communications unit, heads the Dubai account. He was an aide to House Foreign Committee Chair Ed Royce and Speaker of the House John Boehner.

The 11-member Dubai team also includes stratcom unit senior managing directors Dan Hunter and Christine DiBartolo.

Hunter, who heads the Americas financial service practice, joined FTI from Deutsche Bank, where he was responsible for corporate communications for the Americas.

DiBartolo heads the Americas corporate reputation practice. She was a director at Burson-Martsteller and spokesperson for Attorney General Janet Reno, prior to signing on at FTI.

EX-CONGRESSMAN TOWNS REPS ETHIOPIA

Former Brooklyn Democratic Congressman Edolphus "Ed" Towns is providing strategic communications services to Ethiopia in his role as senior advisor at Grey Global Advisors.

During his 30 years in Congress, Towns served three Brooklyn districts and chaired the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.



Ed Towns

Towns, 89, stepped down from Congress in 2012 and was succeeded by Hakeem Jeffries, who is the current Democratic leader.

Justin Gray, CEO of Gray Global Advisors, joins Towns in representing Ethiopia. Grey Global Advisors is serving as a subcontractor to APCO Worldwide on the business.

It receives a monthly fee of \$20K under the one-year consulting agreement with APCO.

Ethiopia pays APCO a monthly retainer of \$158,577.

US STEEL HIRES CHIENG FOR IR POST

US Steel appoints Emily Chieng as investor relations officer, effective in September. She will succeed Kevin Lewis, who took on the role of VP, finance last December. Chieng joins USS from Goldman Sachs, where she was VP, equity research, North America Metals & Mining.



Emily Chieng

In her new position, Chieng will focus on enhancing understanding and awareness of the company's Best for All strategy by facilitating communications between current and prospective investors, the company's senior leadership team and the broader financial community.

USS posted a 20.6 percent decline in 2Q revenues to \$5B. Net income tumbled 51.2 percent to \$477M.

NEWS OF FIRMS

[Ruder Finn](#) launches RF Studio 53, which the firm says will "create at the intersection of human imagination and digital intelligence." The new initiative combines the creative and tech teams from recently acquired Osmosis Films and SPI Group with Ruder Finn's US and UK-based design and video teams, along with developers from Ruder Finn's TechLab teams based in the US and India. It will be led by Osmosis's Zach Russo (creative director), along with Ruder Finn's Tejas Totade (chief technology officer), SPI Group's James Koppental (managing director) and Ruder Finn UK's Lee Manning (global head of design). RF TechLab will continue as Ruder Finn's technology and analytics incubator while Osmosis Films will remain as an independent label within Studio 53 producing original content across film and emerging platforms.



Decibel Blue Creative Marketing & PR founder David Eichler sells the agency to Tyler Rathjen, who has been a partner at the firm since 2016. All staff members will remain with Decibel Blue and the agency will continue to operate out of its offices in Phoenix and Denver. Eichler will assume a senior advisor role, while also moving on to pursue other passions. Under Eichler's direction since 2005, Decibel Blue provides advertising, design, media relations, social media, digital marketing, and brand management services.

KCD PR president Kevin Dinino is selected as one of San Diego Business Journal's 2023 Leaders of Influence in Advertising, PR & Marketing. The Leaders of Influence Award honors executives across San Diego County for their status and contributions as distinguished professionals within their fields. This is the first year the publication is honoring leaders in this category.

Qorvis launches and registers its Qorvis GeoPols Dubai Multi Commodities Centre, the firm's physical presence in the United Arab Emirates. Following the management buyout and relaunch earlier this year, the establishment of the DMCC hub complements Qorvis' Washington, D.C. headquarters and presence in Geneva, Brussels and Riyadh. The new unit will be led by managing partner for the EMEA region Grace Fenstermaker and chief financial officer Özkan Yilmaz.



Jackson Spalding unveils a new brand identity, which includes a reimagined logo and color palette, as well as the relaunch of the agency's website. The agency says that the revamped JacksonSpalding.com was developed with a focus on immediately showcasing the power of the agency's clients, work and team. The new logo was created by Jackson Spalding designer and Steely Works founder Brian Steely.

The Museum of Public Relations elects Renée Edelman, Mara Hedgecoth and Stacey Jones to its board of directors. Edelman, senior VP, archivist & special projects, worked on the Edelman Museum that opened in the firm's new Chicago co-headquarters in fall 2022 to celebrate Edelman's 70th anniversary. Hedgecoth is APCO Worldwide chief communication and marketing officer. Jones, who most recently led corporate communications at Accenture, is IPR's Immediate past president.

GOOGLE'S GALLAGHER GOES TO TENEO

Leigh Gallagher, director of external affairs at Google, has joined Teneo as senior managing director in its US strategy and communications unit.



Leigh Gallagher

She will counsel Teneo's clients on executive positioning, media engagement and strategic communications.

Gallagher joined Google in 2019 to deepen its relationships with editors, columnists and reporters, and help the communications team to become a source for technology news. Earlier, she did a 12-year stint at *Fortune*.

Andrea Calise, president of Teneo's US strategy and communications group, called Gallagher "an important thought leader, convener and respected journalist."

BGR BAGS \$600K SERBIA PACT

BGR Government Affairs has signed a \$600K contract to provide strategic guidance, PR, and government affairs services to Serbia.

The firm may contact US government officials, NGOs and the media on behalf of Serbia.



Serbia maintains friendly relations with Russia, its fellow Slavic nation, and has not joined in pressing sanctions against it.

Jeff Birnbaum, president of BGR's PR unit, and international & trade practice co-heads Lester Munson and Maya Seiden, handle the Serbia business.

Serbia's US ambassador Marko Djuric oversees the BGR relationship, which began on July 20.

The Balkan nation signed Karv Communications to a \$720K one-year pact, effective July 15.

GOODMAN, BIGGS BOLSTER 160/90

Former BCW EVP and managing director AJ Goodman and Victoria Biggs, who previously led the UK and EMEA consumer practice at MSLGROUP, have come on board at Endeavor's 160/90 as senior VPs.

Goodman will serve as senior VP, global corporate communications lead, based in New York, and Biggs will take on the role of senior VP, global consumer PR lead in London. They will both develop and implement global growth strategies, manage 160/90's global corporate and consumer PR initiatives, and oversee key accounts.



AJ Goodman, Victoria Biggs

Before joining BCW in 2019, Goodman was SVP media, corporate and public affairs at Edelman. He previously was an SVP at both Ketchum and Omnicom.

Biggs was most recently chief communications officer at Motorway, a UK-based platform that connects a network of more than 5,000 professional car dealers

with customers. She has also served as PR director at eBay and has held senior positions at travel platform Trainline, Burson-Marsteller (now BCW) and Freud Communications.

FGS HANDLES FREEMAN'S DEAL FOR SPARKS

FGS Global represents Freeman, a 96-year-old Dallas-based event management company, as it acquires Sparks, live + digital experiential marketer in Philadelphia.

Sparks has handled exhibit and event experiences for blue-chip clients such as Google, Anheuser-Busch InBev, and Salesforce.

"Our combination with Sparks creates a unique opportunity to accelerate Freeman's vision to become a leader in the corporate space," said Bob Priest-Heck, CEO of Freeman. KKR, which is a strategic partner of Freeman, provided financing for the deal.

The investment firm also is a partner and owner of 30 percent of FGS Global. WPP holds a 57.7 percent stake.

FGS Global's Jared Levy and Mike DeGraff work the Freeman deal.



WOODLANDS WANTS DESTINATION MARKETING

The Woodlands, Texas is requesting proposals from agencies that can provide media buying and creative services.

The Montgomery County, township, which is located 28 miles north of Houston, is part of in the Houston–The Woodlands–Sugar Land metropolitan statistical area. It counts a population of about 114,000.

Scope of the work includes media buying, strategy and management and creative design services for advertising placements (print, digital, broadcast, OOH, etc.).

Proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. (CST) on Friday, August 11, and should be mailed to: Ashley White, Marketing Director; The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau; 2801 Technology Forest Blvd.; The Woodlands, Texas 77381

All bidding agencies must submit one original proposal on a flash drive and two hard copies.

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



CHOBANI ADDS UBER'S RANESE AS CMO

Chobani, a food and beverage company that was originally known for its Greek yogurt, appoints former Uber chief marketing officer Thomas Ranese as its CMO, effective Aug. 14.

Ranese was most recently interim CMO at Lingo, Abbott's bio-wearables and health tech product unit. He has also been VP, global hardware marketing at Google, and as CMO of Empire State Development, oversaw New York State's I LOVE NY tourism marketing campaign.

"Thomas brings a unique combination of creativity and business acumen with deep expertise in brand building, digital strategy and integrated marketing that will be critical as we continue to innovate, scale our brand and drive growth in new categories," said Chobani president and chief operations officer Kevin Burns.



Thomas Ranese

COMMENTARY



It's in the bag... Donald Trump says he needs one more indictment to secure his election.

Georgia will soon deliver the goods, indicting the former president for his role in attempting to overturn the Peach State's 2020 election.

Trump can't wait. He's excited about receiving a PR bonus from Georgia's law enforcement squad.

Fulton County sheriff Pat Labat expects Trump will have to take a mug shot. "Unless somebody tells me differently, we are following our normal practices, and so it doesn't matter your status, we'll have a mugshot ready for you," Labat told WSBTV.

The mug shot would be PR gold for Trump. It would play into his whining about victimhood.

Team Trump will plaster the mug shot all over its pleas for campaign cash. The mug shot will adorn Trump flags. Even Biden supporters would kick in for a mug shot of Trump.

Labat should think twice about boosting Trump's campaign.

Hitting those country roads. Trump wants to move the trial for the storming of the Capitol to "an impartial Venue, such as the politically unbiased nearby State of West Virginia!" according to his post on Truth Social.

Trump claims it's impossible to get a fair trial in Washington because it is "over 95% anti-Trump, & for which I have called for a Federal TAKEOVER in order to bring our Capital back to Greatness," he posted.

He is limiting himself. West Virginia only gave 68.6 percent of its vote to Trump in the 2020 election. Why not seal the deal and move the trial to the more-friendly confines of Mar-a-Lago?

Trump isn't exactly winning over potential DC jurors, posting that Washington is "filthy, dirty, falling apart and unsafe."

The fact remains that DC is where Trump's alleged criminal activity took place. He was also based in DC on that Jan. 6 day when America's democracy was on the brink.

Trump can always visit West Virginia after he exits prison. The Mountain State will roll out a deep red carpet for him.

DeSantis scores a mighty win. The Central Florida Tourism Oversight District, which the Florida governor installed to go after Walt Disney Co. has abolished DEI programming.

"The so-called diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives that were advanced during the tenure of the previous board were illegal and simply Un-American," said administrator Glenton Gillian. "Our district will no longer participate in any attempt to divide us by race, or advance the notion that we are not created equal."

The previous board, Reedy Creek Improvement District, of course, used DEI to level the playing field because as George Orwell wrote: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

Assuming DeSantis hasn't banned "Animal Farm" from Florida's public libraries, Gillian should take out a copy.

Calls it like it is. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres drove home the existential threat facing the world, declaring that the global warming era is now over.

"The era of global boiling has arrived," he said on July 27. Hats off.

Global warming was always a lousy term to describe the heating of the atmosphere. It has a sense of calmness, or even serenity. People living in Siberia or Canada's far north might even welcome a bit of global warming.

But nobody wants to experience global boiling, which brings tragedies such as "children swept away by monsoon rains, families running from the flames, and workers collapsing in scorching heat," said Guterres.

The world has just experienced the hottest July on record. Michael Mann, a climate scientist at the University of Pennsylvania, said the Earth hasn't been this hot in 120K years.

Yet morons such as Alabama's Senator Tommy Tuberville revel in their ignorance. The Republican said there's too much whining about the heat.

"There is a very scientific word for this: it's called summer," he told the Huffington Post. "It's no hotter right now than it's ever been. The world's not heating up, come on."

Tommy's brain must have melted down during those football practices.

Guterres believes there is still a little time left "to stop the worst" if leaders "turn a year of burning heat into a year of burning action."

The UN will kick off its [Climate Ambition Summit](#) at its New York headquarters on Sept. 20, while the [COP28 session](#) is slated in November at Dubai.

PR firms can do their part in fighting global boiling.

They can heed Guterres' call: "No more greenwashing. No more deception. And no more abusive distortions of antitrust laws to sabotage net zero alliances."

Faith and begorrah. The US State Dept. has issued a "security awareness alert" for Ireland after three teenaged thugs brutally attacked a 57-year-old American tourist in Dublin.

"The US Embassy Dublin encourages all citizens to be aware of their surroundings, especially when traveling in unfamiliar places, crowded locations, empty streets, or at night," says the alert.

More than 1.7M Americans visited Ireland in 2019, prior to the pandemic. They spent \$1.5B, up 71 percent since 2014.

They have to realize that Ireland is more than a country with a robust culture, history of rebellion, magnificent landscapes, rugged coast, shamrocks, fairies, and great craic.

The capital city of Dublin suffers the same petty crimes as NYC or any major city in the US.

The best advice for Americans when visiting Ireland comes from Sergeant Phil Esterhaus of the 1980s "Hill Street Blues" cop show, who said: "Let's be careful out there."

—Kevin McCauley