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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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NEBRASKA LOTTERY REVIEWS \$5M ACCOUNT

The Nebraska Lottery has rolled the dice on a review of its \$5.6M advertising and PR account.

The work encompasses creative and media planning, digital and social media, PR, research and other promotions.

Omaha-based agency SKAR is the six-year incumbent after winning a three-year pact in 2009 and picking up that contract's three option years.



The Lottery's ad budget is set at 3.5% of annual sales, which are forecast to be \$161M for the current fiscal year. Its offices are in Lincoln.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/12W2K7b>.

OMC PICKS UP DDC IN DC

Omnicom has acquired tech-savvy Washington public affairs shop DDC Advocacy.

Dale Adams, CEO of Omnicom's DAS Group, which includes its PR operations, said DDC is a "data-driven consulting company that knows how to use highly relevant data for targeting and campaign activation."

B.R. McConnon founded the firm in 1996 as Democracy Data & Communications. It handles grassroots and advocacy campaigns, PR and paid media research, social media, and data analysis, among related tasks.

DDC counts around 145 staffers. Several top execs are veterans of Burson-Marsteller's Direct Impact, including president Jim Gianiny and partners Tom Benjamin and John Brady.

FH's NARU MARCHES TO B-M

Steve Naru, who headed FleishmanHillard's global media practice, has left for Burson-Marsteller as US media relations head and corporate/financial group managing director.

The West Point graduate and 10-year Army veteran has 25 years of media experience.

At FH, he worked with clients such as New York Times Co., Monsanto, AT&T, Columbia Business School, Huawei, Barnes & Noble and Hyatt.

Earlier, he was interim VP-strategic communications and external PR at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and global media relations for Thomson Reuters.

Naru is beginning his second tour of duty at B-M, where he worked on the US Postal Service, NHL, Philip Morris, Coca-Cola and Warner-Lambert after leaving military service. He now reports to Alan Sexton, US corporate & financial practice chair and NYC market leader.

CHINA'S BLUEFOCUS ACQUIRES CITIZEN

China's BlueFocus Communications has acquired Citizen Relations, which has more than 200 staffers in the US, Canada and UK.

CEO Oscar Zhao has a \$300M war chest to acquire PR/advertising firms in the west.

The company acquired a 20 percent stake in Peter Chadlington's Huntsworth and We Are Social—both in London—last year. It picked up Fuseproject of San Francisco this summer.

Citizen Relations chief Daryl McCullough said in a statement that the alliance with BlueFocus would help power its growth plans. He's "excited about the close cultural fit with Blue Focus, which, like Citizen, places a high entrepreneurialism and the happiness of our people and our clients."

McCullough joined PainePR, which rebranded in 2011 as CitizenPaine, more than two decades ago. He'll remain in his post.

Procter & Gamble, The Gap, Destination British Columbia, Best Buy, Habitat for Humanity, General Mills and Cirque du Soleil are among Citizen Relations.

The acquisition structure calls for BlueFocus, which as a \$4.6B market capitalization and 3,500 staffers, to acquire majority ownership in Vision 7 International, parent of Citizens PR and Cossette ad agency.

The transaction has been in the works since May when Mill Road Capital, private equity firm in Connecticut, announced it was looking for a buyer of Vision7, which is had owned for the past five years.

DETROIT ECON DEV CORP. SEEKS PR HELP

The economic development corporation for the financially strapped City of Detroit is on the hunt for agency help to support a \$4.25M program aimed to attract businesses and real estate investment along its commercial corridors.

The office of Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan is developing the program to woo business and use city resources to improve the "physical conditions" of areas where commerce has been focused in the city.

Reads the RFP: "The EDC hopes to garner significant regional press and aspires to generate national and international interest for this initiative."

A one-year contract through Dec. 31, 2015 is planned. Proposals are due Dec. 22.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/1uO9mvH>.



PR-CHALLENGED SEAWORLD DEMOTES CEO

Jim Atchinson, 48, will step down as CEO of SeaWorld Entertainment and move into a vice chairman slot at the PR-challenged theme park operator on Jan. 15.

Chairman Dave D'Allessandro, 62-year-old former CEO of John Hancock Financial Services, will assume the top spot unit once a search for a new CEO is found. The company anticipates a search of six-to-nine months.

Since 2010, SeaWorld has been battling a PR crisis connected to the death of trainer Dawn Brancheau who was killed by orca Tilikum.

The 2013 release of the documentary, "Blackfish," which covered the alleged stresses that killer whales suffer in captivity, compounded SeaWorld's PR woes.

In response to the film, SeaWorld announced a program to enlarge and improve its facilities for orcas, but that plan has gained little support from its animal rights opponents.

The negative publicity has hurt attendance at SeaWorld's 11 theme parks. The number of visitors slipped from 8.9M to 8.4M during the third quarter. That declining visitor count helped send SeaWorld's net crashing 27.8% to \$87.2M on a 7.8 percent slide in Q3 revenues to \$495.8M.

Atchinson will consult SeaWorld in international expansion and conservation initiatives. He is going to be nominated to chair the independent SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund.

SeaWorld also appointed William Gray, former co-CEO of Ogilvy North America, and ex-California Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher to the board. The Golden State is a hotbed of anti-SeaWorld activity.

The Orlando-based company also announced a restructuring program that will centralize operations and reduce the number of jobs.

Entertainment PR firm 42West helped Sea World respond to the documentary last year.

'DINOSAURLAND' HUNTS FOR PR

Utah's Uintah County, an outdoor recreation mecca that is the home of Dinosaur National Monument, is on the hunt for a PR firm to boost travel and tourism to the region.

The desert landscape amid the Uintah Mountains contains an estimated 1,500 dinosaur bones, marketed as "Dinosaurland," and encompasses three state parks as well as the National Monument that stretches into neighboring Colorado. White water rafting and outdoor recreation are also top draws.

Uintah County Travel and Tourism released an RFP this month covering tourism marketing and PR efforts to enhance the region's current "tourism brand and image."

Proposals are due Dec. 22.
RFP: <http://bit.ly/1GI24iE>.



Atchinson

SHARPTON IS FIXTURE AT WHITE HOUSE PR SHOP

Rev. Al Sharpton has visited the White House 61 times since 2009, a good chunk of those trips huddling with President Obama's PR staffers.

The *National Review* examined the White House visitor log and found that 34 of the New York-based civil rights activist's trips were for high-profile events such as the "Celebration of Music from the Civil Rights Movement" and a welcoming ceremony for Mexico president Felipe Calderon.

The MSNBC commentator had only a single one-on-one meeting with the President, which was more than what he achieved during the reign of George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, and another lone session with Obama's now former political advisor David Axelrod.

Sharpton attended two movie screenings, a Super Bowl party and a party for the President.

Most of the other visits were with top presidential advisor Valerie Jarrett and her PR staff.

Sharpton had four sit-downs with Jarrett and seven with her top communications aide Heather Foster.

The reverend also met one-on-one with Buffy Wicks, deputy director of Jarrett's White House office, Kathy Branch, Jarrett's administrative assistant, and Dominique Mann, communications officer.

Sharpton met Mann on Aug. 4, the day he called for a march to seek justice for Eric Garner, who died at the hands of Staten Island police.

It's expected that Sharpton will continue making frequent trips to the White House through 2016 as racial tensions in the US remain high.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ENLISTS EDELMAN

The University of Michigan turned to Edelman in the wake of the fallout following the resignation of its athletic director and firing of football coach after a quarterback re-entered a game following his concussion.

The No. 1 independent firm, which handled scandals at Penn State (Joe Paterno/Jerry Sandusky) and University of North Carolina (academics), was brought in to provide U-M an "outside perspective," spokesperson Rick Fitzgerald told the *Detroit Free Press*.

In the Sept. 27 game against Minnesota, Shane Morris was allowed to remain on the field and later returned to the huddle despite the head injury.

At a press conference two days after the game, coach Brady Hoke denied knowing about his player's concussion. AD Dave Brandon issued a statement later to say he knew about the injury but that Hoke only found out about it after the presser.

The concussion was diagnosed the day before the news conference.

Sports commentators throughout the country called for the two men to resign, bringing national embarrassment to U-M, according to the Free Press.

Students conducted "Fire Brandon" rallies on campus, including the home of U-M president Mark Schlissel. Brandon, former CEO of Dominos Pizza, resigned Oct. 31.

Hoke was fired as head coach of the Wolverines on Dec. 2. He had two-years left on his five-year contract.



ECONOMIST EIC TAKES BLOOMBERG POST

John Micklethwait, editor-in-chief of *The Economist* since 2006, will assume that position at Bloomberg in New York in January.

He will take over for Matt Winkler, founding editor of Bloomberg News. The 25-year veteran of Bloomberg will become e-i-c emeritus and conduct high-profile interviews and provide editorial counsel.

Mike Bloomberg, who has resumed command of the operation, said Winkler "has accomplished more than either of us thought possible" and "set a new standard for journalistic excellence."



Micklethwait

Micklethwait, according to Bloomberg, is "one of the world's smartest thinkers on the forces of globalization" and a "perfect fit" for the company.

He joined the British publication in 1987 from Chase Manhattan Bank. Prior to the e-i-c position, Micklethwait was business and US editor.

The most recent of his five books is called "The Fourth Revolution: The Global Race to Reinvent the State."

At Bloomberg, Micklethwait will oversee 2,500 reporters and editors in 150 bureaus across the global.

He'll report to Mike Bloomberg on business and policy matters and work closely with Justin Smith, CEO of Bloomberg Media Group.

RUSBRIDGER STEPS DOWN AT GUARDIAN

Alan Rusbridger, editor-in-chief of the *Guardian* for 20 years, is stepping down from the post during the summer.

He will chair the Scott Trust, which owns the UK paper, taking over for Liz Forgan.

She praised Rusbridger as "the outstanding editor of his generation" who has fully embraced the digital age.

At the Trust, he would oversee the independent body that "guarantees the editorial integrity and commercial future of the Guardian," said Forgan.

The Guardian website attracted more than 110M unique visitors in October.

It won a Pulitzer Prize this year for reporting on the surveillance activities of the US government following the Edward Snowden leaks.

Rusbridger, who will soon turn 61, joined the Guardian in 1979 from the *Cambridge Evening News*.

He left for the TV critic job at the Observer and exited for the Washington editor post of the *London Daily News*.

Rusbridger returned to the Guardian to launch its weekend edition and features section before moving to the editor slot in 1995.

He is the 10th editor of the paper since its began in 1821 as the Manchester Guardian.



Rusbridger

FORBES STAFFS UP, MOVES TO NJ

Miguel Helft, senior writer, *Fortune*, is moving to *Forbes* as San Francisco bureau chief, effective Jan. 20, 2015. He will lead tech reporting and edit magazine and online features, in addition to writing regularly. He was tech writer for the *New York Times*, editorial writer at the *San Jose Mercury News* and senior writer at *The Industry Standard*, among other posts.

The New York-based *Forbes* is moving to Jersey City, N.J., this month after 97 years in Manhattan.

Loren Feldman, small business editor, *New York Times*, joins *Forbes* as senior editor of its entrepreneurs coverage, starting Jan. 5. She was an editor at Inc.com and editor-in-chief of *Philadelphia* magazine, among other posts.

Josh Robinson, digital editor for the travel section at the Times, will move to *Forbes* Dec. 22 in a new post creating and managing sponsored editorial. And UK cybersecurity journalist Thomas Fox-Brewster is slated to join as a staff writer Jan. 5, based in London.

FOX REPORTER'S DEATH RULED SUICIDE

Dominic Di-Natale, a Fox News correspondent most recently reporting from Ferguson, Mo., was found dead of an apparent suicide. He was 43.

"He was an esteemed journalist and an integral part of our news coverage throughout the Middle East," Fox News said in a statement.

Di-Natale reported from around the world as a BBC World correspondent before joining Fox News in 2007. He was recently stationed out of its Los Angeles bureau.

Di-Natale's body was found in Colorado, where he owned property, the network said.

EMBATTLED ABERCROMBIE CHIEF RETIRES

Abercrombie & Fitch's Michael Jeffries has announced today he's stepping down from the helm of the teen-age apparel chain effective immediately.

Arthur Martinez, non-executive chairman, will assume the executive chairman role and preside over a newly created office of the chairman to handle day-to-day until a new chief is found.

A search of both insider and outsider candidates has begun.

Jeffries, who lost this chairman title in January, has been the source of various PR outrages following his rather intemperate remarks about body size and looks.

During a 2006 interview with Salon, Jeffries said there are cool and not-so-cool kids. "We go after the attractive all-American kid with a great attitude and a lot of friends. A lot of people don't belong [in our clothes], and they can't belong. Are we exclusionary? Absolutely," he told Salon.

Jeffries went on to say that retailers that target "everybody: young, old, fat, skinny" become "totally vanilla. You don't alienate anybody, but you don't excite anybody either."

Abercrombie suffered 11 consecutive quarters of same-store sales decline.

Kekst & Co.'s Dawn Dover handles the Abercrombie account. Publicis Groupe owns Kekst.

WHAT EVERY CLIENT SHOULD KNOW

By Sandi Goldfarb

At the conclusion of a kick-off meeting with our new client, Crossroads for Kids, the organization's president, Deb Samuels asked, "What can I do to be a good client?" In more than 25 years in the industry, no client has ever asked that question. Here are 10 guidelines:

1. Share detailed information in a timely manner. Follow up questions are inevitable. But the more background you provide on a person, program or product, the more successfully we can tell your story.

2. If more than one person must approve a document, coordinate the review with each participant working from the same draft. This will help avoid confusion, ensure accuracy and streamline the process.

3. Whenever possible, limit the number of colleagues who must sign off on projects and materials to those directly responsible for the organization's communications and those who are experts on specific content. I'm all for buy-in, but needing approval from a large group can cause long delays and result in conflicts.

4. When it comes to press inquiries and opportunities, be as accessible as possible. The ability to respond quickly and thoughtfully can make the difference between being featured or excluded.

5. Have more than one spokesperson prepped and at your disposal. Busy schedules don't always permit the president, board chair or executive director of an organization to participate in interviews. Have a deep "bench."

6. Take advantage of training services your agency offers. Media and presentation training provides the tools needed to help frame a conversation, effectively communicate key points and position your organization in the most positive light.

7. Understand the difference between marketing and media relations. While we may love your new tag line, advertising lingo should not be incorporated into press materials.

8. If something happens— positive or negative— tell us immediately. We can't offer advice or support if we don't know that you've received an award, are announcing or eliminating an initiative or are dealing with employee malfeasance. Our relationships with reporters and editors can help set the tone.

9. Understand what makes a story newsworthy. Is it a trend? A national model? Very few announcements are important enough for a press release let alone a press conference.

10. Social media is a communications tool. And so are bylined commentaries, letters to the editor, speeches and media advisories. Each plays a specific role in a strategic media relations campaign. Your PR consultant can identify which are the most appropriate for your story.

In the same way that a good PR practitioner must understand the work styles of reporters and editors, their priorities and interests, it's important to educate clients so they can recognize the elements of a good story, respect deadlines, know when they will serve as the "star" or supporting player, AKA expert resource, in an article or segment and understand the basic tools at our disposal.

Sandi Goldfarb is a senior VP of Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications, Boston.

SEEING SPORTS COMMS FOR THE WHOLE FIELD

By Bryan Harris

In order to reach the sports fan, there's an increasing gravitation toward integrated marketing approaches. Clients, particularly in sports, are seeing the benefits of connecting with audiences across all types of media. They're seeing their brand as more than simply as a mascot or a logo.

Today, sports brands transcend the playing fields into the boardroom, the realtor's office, the neighborhood and, as we're all aware, our social media feeds.

This move toward integration has been fueled by what I deem the "Three Es":

Efficiency. Integration leads to efficiency for the client. Rather than devote considerable time and resources to basic project coordination, the communication process is streamlined through the utilization of one fully integrated firm.

Expertise. Clients are increasingly seeking diverse expertise from their firms. The business of sports is increasingly business-oriented, and that means possessing expertise in multiple industries, ranging from real estate, legal affairs, public policy, etc. Possessing individuals with those types of industry experiences is appealing to traditional sports clients as they deal with issues related to internal communications, construction projects and consumer-oriented campaigns.

Effectivity. Clients need their firms to be effective. At the end of the day, results matter, and the right results matter. A summary report showing 487 media hits doesn't cut it; what's the impact on the business? Each client has a series of goals they wish to accomplish, and integration — through enhanced collaboration, a streamlined approach and deep reserve of resources — enables firms to meet them.

How have we seen these trends play out? Consider these two examples:

For the College Football Hall of Fame and Chick-fil-A Fan Experience, the client's story was largely focused on the construction of a new facility, and the opening of a new world-class attraction, in downtown Atlanta. This required a pool of our skill sets, from event planning to media relations to digital media strategy.

For the Atlanta Braves, it was to shepherd its message and counsel its executive team throughout the process of building a new ballpark in the heart of Braves Country. While the future successes of the franchise will be realized on the new diamond at SunTrust Park, the client's ongoing needs revolve around the construction of a significant real estate project and massive economic development opportunity for the metro Atlanta area.

In both instances, clients needed expertise that went beyond a simple PR campaign designed to boost fan attendance or promote an accomplishment on the field. They needed integrated, strategic counsel that provided guidance and direction in industries where they weren't as well versed. That's where the sports business industry is moving, and that's where real opportunity for growth exists: helping those teams, franchises and organizations navigate unfamiliar waters.

Bryan Harris is sports practice leader at Jackson | Spalding.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**EX-BLAIR AIDE JOINS FTI**

Patricia Hewitt, who served in Tony Blair's government as Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Cabinet Minister for Women and Health Secretary, has joined FTI Consulting's London office as senior adviser in its strategic communications unit.

Prior to joining Parliament in 1997, Hewitt was at consulting giant Accenture as head of research for Europe, Middle East and Africa.

She also founded the center-left think tank Public Policy Research and was press secretary for the Leader of the Opposition.

Upon leaving government, Hewitt joined BT's board of directors and chaired its remuneration and pension committees. Currently, she sits on the board of EuroTunnel Group.

FTI also added another politico Philippa Roe, who is leader of the Westminster City Council, to its strategic communications offering.

Alex Deane who also joined FTI from Accounting for International Development, heads the UK PA unit.

DELIA'S DONS ICR IN LIQUIDATION

Delia's, the publicly traded clothing retailer aimed at teenage girls, is relying on ICR for PR support as it navigates Chapter 11 bankruptcy with plans to liquidate its assets and shutter its retail stores.

The New York-based company, which saw its heyday in the 1990s with a robust mall retail and catalog business, filed Ch. 11 on Dec. 7 after attempting to raise financing or find a buyer. It landed \$20M in financing to run going-out-of-business sales and shutter operations at its 95 or so stores.

Delia's CEO Tracy Gardner and COO Brian Lex Austin-Gemas stepped down on Dec. 5.

ICR managing director Jean Fontana, a retail sector specialist, is guiding communications for the company as it winds down.

Vox reported today that Delia's is among a handful of struggling mall-centric retailers like Aeropostale, Abercrombie & Fitch, and American Eagle that face declining sales and stock prices amid cheaper competition and as teens spend their money more on food, electronics and video games.

MARCUS DIES AT 89

Bruce Marcus, a trailblazer in legal and professional services PR, died Dec. 1 in New Haven. He was 89.

The author of 16 books such as *The Complete Guide to Marketing Professional Services* and *New Dimensions in Investor Relations* handled PR and advertising for both Arthur Young & Co. Coopers & Lybrand.

He also was senior partner at the Financial Relations Board, staffer at Mobil and Ruder Finn and head of his own firm.

Marcus counseled Goldman Sachs, Lehman Brothers, Donald Lufkin & Jenrette, Citicorp, Chemical Bank, Puerto Rico and Turkey. He also was president of the New York Assn. of Business Economists.

He was active on the political front as speechwriter for former New York Senators Robert Kennedy and Jacob Javits.

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York Area**

Ogilvy PR, New York/Brand USA, the public-private tourism partnership aimed at boosting foreign travel to the US, as AOR for global media relations, following a review. Ogilvy was the incumbent.

Nicholas & Lence Communications, New York/Trump Golf Links at Ferry Point, Bronx, championship Jack Nicklaus signature golf course slated for spring 2015 opening. The course sits at the foot of the Whitestone Bridge with views of Manhattan and will be the city's 14th public golf facility. Donald Trump said he was impressed with the firm's work at the Central Park Horse Show Presented by Rolex at the Trump Rink last summer.

Lou Hammond & Associates, New York/ Tourism Saint Barths, French island of Saint Barthélemy; Avocet Hospitality Group, owner of two properties in the South Carolina Lowcountry: The Vendue, an 84-room boutique art hotel housed in repurposed 18th-century warehouses in the heart of historic Downtown Charleston, and Tides, a 132-room full-service oceanfront hotel set on Folly Beach; SnapCap, web-based company focused on small business finance and lending, and the City of Lexington, N.C., "Barbecue Capital of the World," all for PR.

Nancy J. Friedman PR, New York/Generator Hostels, to launch Generator Paris, slated to open in the city's 10th Arrondissement in March 2015. Locations in Rome and Amsterdam are to follow and U.S. locations are in development. NJFPR's scope includes integrated marketing communications.

CRC, New York/Breil, 75-year-old Italian timepieces brand, for consumer PR as it grows its presence and brand awareness in the US. CRC specializes in fashion, accessories and beauty clients.

Bullfrog & Baum, New York/Cherry restaurants, for PR and marketing to promote its two Japanese eateries – Cherry at Dream Meatpacking District and Cherry Izakaya (Williamsburg, Brooklyn).

East

Shift Communications, Boston/Hawaii Visitors & Convention Bureau, as AOR for social media. Honolulu-based Digital Mediums was tapped to provide social media services.

MMI, Raleigh, N.C./Park West Barber School, largest operator of barber schools in the US, as AOR for integrated marketing, including broadcast and digital advertising, social media, PR and video services to build awareness for the school's brand and drive student enrollment as it expands into new markets.

Southeast

IdeaWorks Creative Group, Tampa/Shaser Bioscience, as AOR for PR for the aesthetic dermatology devices company owned by Spectrum Brands, successor to Rayovac Corp.

The Publicity Agency, Tampa/Beauty TV, for PR the Los Angeles-based channel focused on makeup tips, skincare, hair and nail tutorials and related content.

Respublica, Miami/NBCUniversal's Hispanic Enterprises and Content, for advertising, brand strategy, promotions and consumer engagement, community relations and government affairs.

NEWS OF SERVICES**DEVANEY BEST IN SHOW AT BIM PR AWARDS**

Devaney & Associates and client Carroll Hospital Center won Best in Show honors at PRSA Maryland's Best in Maryland awards Dec. 4 at the Hilton Baltimore.

The integrated, paid/earned media campaign for the Westminster, Md.-based non-profit community hospital touted the facility's orthopedics services to aging baby boomers and athletes, featuring individual patients' stories through before and after interviews.



Surgeries increased 15% and appointments rose 10 percent over a year earlier.

Johns Hopkins took home four BIM awards – two for JH University press and two for JH Healthcare – while Devaney earned three BIMs, and Crosby Marketing Communications, Chesapeake Public Strategies, Erickson Living, Maryland Highway Administration, and Image Power earned two apiece.

Bonnie Henson of Bonnie Henson Communications was honored for lifetime achievement, while T. Rowe Price PR specialist Kylie Muratore was named New Professional of the Year.

Full list of winners and photos are at prsamd.org.

AMERICANS DISTRUST ONLINE REVIEWS.

Consumers have adopted a noted cynicism toward the accuracy and credibility of online reviews. A YouGov Omnibus survey, conducted in October, found that a vast majority of consumers now find online reviews untrustworthy, as only 10% believe reviews of products and services are conducted in an open and honest manner.

Almost half—48%—of those polled said they believe reviewers occasionally rate products and services without actually trying them.

The survey, which was carried out online and sampled 1,145 U.S. adults, found that only 13% of those polled consider online reviews “trustworthy.”

The study also found 36% believe businesses often pen positive reviews to bolster their own products and services, and 50% believe businesses sometimes pen negative reviews of competitors' products and services.

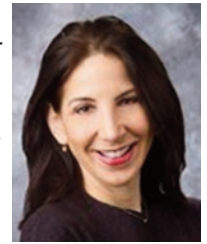
Though Americans' perceptions of online reviews appears to be characterized by widespread distrust, the study also found that most still see online reviews as an important step in the course of deciding whether to buy a product or service.

The survey showed 78% admitted to looking at online reviews before making purchases, with 41% of consumers referring to online reviews as “very important.” Of those polled who admitted reading online reviews, a little more than half — 52% — said they read four or more reviews before making a purchase. About three-quarters — 77% — said they try to read an equal number of positive and negative reviews.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/1uOKsfq>.

PEOPLE**Joined**

Beth Foley, senior director, corporate comms., Pacific Gas and Electric Company, to Michael Baker International, Pittsburgh, as executive VP and chief communications officer. She held communications leadership roles with GSI Commerce (now part of eBay), Radian International, PJM Interconnection, and Progress Energy, now Duke Energy.

**Foley**

Krista Canfield, who spent six years at LinkedIn rising to lead PR for its mobile products, to social travel planning company Gogobot as VP of communications. Canfield is a former journalist who moved to tech PR with Horn Group in the mid-2000s. Gogobot, based in Menlo Park, is billed as the “go-to place for places to go” and lets users search for restaurants, activities and lodging through its website and app.

Nzinga Shaw, senior VP of diversity and inclusion, Edelman, to the Atlanta Hawks, as chief diversity and inclusion officer for the NBA franchise following co-owner Bruce Levenson's racially charged remarks in an email that went public in September. That episode followed racially tinged comments by Hawks coach Danny Ferry.

**Chadwick**

Dara Chadwick, chief of strategic communications and media relations for HealthSource RI, to Delta Dental of Rhode Island, dental insurer, as dir. of corporate comms.

Jarad Geldner of Glover Park Group, Washington, DC, to Red Banyan Group to direct the Washington office of the Florida-based firm as a principal. He is a former political analyst and director of national events for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

Promoted

Sara Conley to VP and officer, Public Communications Inc., Chicago. Conley, a healthcare and not-for-profit PR specialist, joined the firm in 2004 and will lead its 20-person media group.

Shannon Dean to VP of corporate comms. & community affairs, California Water Service Group, San Jose, Calif., effective Jan. 1, 2015. She is currently dir. of corporate comms. and joined the publicly traded provider of water to two million Californians in 1991.

David Higdon to VP, integrated marketing communications, NASCAR, Daytona Beach, Fla. Higdon's elevation was joined by promotions to Cory Posocco, VP, NASCAR Events Group; Chad Seigler, VP Team Marketing Services (Charlotte); Colin Smith, VP, NASCAR Digital Media and Tshneka Tate, VP, senior assistant general counsel.

Marcus Sorour, who led Waggener Edstrom Communications' Johannesburg office since its inception in 2010, to GM of its UK operations, starting in 2015. Also, **James Wilson**, PR lead for client Microsoft for the West East Central Africa & Indian Ocean Islands, joins EW as GM for South Africa. Both report to Chris Talago, EVP, GM, EMEA.

CHINESE TUNA FLEET DROPS IPO AMID BAD PR

China Tuna, a Chinese long-line tuna fishing company serving the ravenous Japanese sushi market, has pulled the plug on a planned \$150M initial public offering after "negative publicity" and a regulatory backlash.

Los Angeles-based Winner & Associates, part of MSLGroup, handles financial communications for China Tuna.



The company last week cited "negative publicity created by third parties" about its fishing policies and practices in abandoning the Hong Kong Stock Exchange IPO.

Chinese regulators in October suspended CT's IPO plans after it said the company "misled investors and the international community" with rosy projections for a tuna catch that is declining globally.

Greenpeace East Asia also pressured Chinese authorities about CT's alleged use of old tuna stock data and the company admitted that China exceeded quotas for Bigeye and Yellowfin tuna in recent years, causing the Chinese government to distance itself from CT, incorporated in the Cayman Islands.

As the *Guardian* noted in critical piece on China Tuna in October, "Reporting on international fishing can often feel like investigating organized crime."

Elsa Lee, senior business advisor at Greenpeace East Asia, said Dec. 10 that China Tuna's scuttled IPO shows a failed business model.

"The withdrawal of CTI's IPO proves that unsustainable fishing is highly risky, and will not get through the scrutiny of financial market regulation, nor attract responsible investors," she said.

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LENDING CLUB BANKS ON GRAYLING

Grayling is handling PR for San Francisco's Lending Club peer-to-peer loan operation, which made a splashy debut on Wall Street on Dec. 11. The stock surged 56.2 percent to close at \$23.43.

The company matches people seeking loans with investors willing to make them, cutting out the banker middle-man from the transaction.

Via an IPO, LC raised \$870M on Dec. 10, giving it a marketing valuation of \$5.4B.

The *New York Times* reports the nascent marketplace loan business will be closely watching LC's stock performance.

A warm reception by investors would encourage other marketplace loan companies to offer shares.

LC is "an amalgam of finance and technology" that has drawn fans in Silicon Valley and Wall Street, according to the NYT.

It boasts a high-profile board of directors that includes Larry Summers (ex-Treasury Secretary), John Mack (former Morgan Stanley CEO) and Mary Meeker (a star Internet analyst and Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers venture capital firm partner).

As of Sept 30, LC handled \$6.2B in loans that generated \$596M in interest for its loan-makers.

ELMENDORF RYAN WORKS DC FOR CUBIST

Elmendorf Ryan assumed Washington duties for Cubist Pharmaceuticals just ahead of the blockbuster announcement that Merck is acquiring the Lexington, Mass-based antibiotics maker for \$9.5B, which includes \$1.1B in debt assumption.

Merck's \$102 per-share offering represents a 35 percent premium over the average last close of the last five trading days.

Cubist CEO Michael Bonney said the deal would provide funds to accelerate product development and expand global reach via Merck's robust worldwide commercial platform.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Cubist is one of the few companies that specializes in treating infectious diseases in hospital settings.

The antibiotics market is expected to boom as resistance to traditional treatments grows and hospitals step up efforts to reduce infections.

Elmendorf Ryan, a Democratic firm, has assigned Kristina Kennedy, a former legislative director to Senator Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), and Stacey Alexander, ex-staffer to Congressman Jim Matheson (D-UT) and APCO Worldwide alum, handle Cubist for healthcare reform and Medicare issues.

Cubist also works for the Nickles Group, the firm of former Republican Senator Don Nickels of Oklahoma.

It pays a \$60K quarterly retainer to Nickles Group.

MWW GETS PARKINSON'S PR DUTIES

MWW has landed work from the National Parkinson's Foundation to handle an awareness campaign to support caregivers who are tending to sufferers of the disease.

After Alzheimer's, Parkinson's disease is the No. 2 neurodegenerative disease. It affects 1M Americans and 4M people overseas.

Currently, there is no cure for Parkinson's, which has symptoms such as shaking/tremors/lack of facial expressions, depression, anxiety and loss of energy.

Joyce Oberdorf, president/CEO of NPF, notes that anyone at any age may have to provide support for a loved one with Parkinson's, making it necessary for a PR push to highlight community and service available to support a good level of care.

"MWW's storytelling expertise, extensive media relationships and proven ability to communicate health topics set them apart for this assignment," she said in announcing the firm's win.

PR veteran Oberdorf was VP-policy, planning and communications at the Michael J. Fox Foundation prior to joining the NPF. Earlier, she was at Aetna (VP-corporate PR), Lehman Brothers (senior VP-deputy director of corporate comms.), Chemical Bank (VP-corporate comms.) and Burson-Marsteller (VP-client services)

The New Jersey-based PR firm is kicking off the push with a public service announcement from home state Senator Cory Booker. His father had the disease. His mother was her husband's primary caregiver.

John Digles, executive VP and Chicago GM, heads the firm's health and wellness practice.

Skyrocketing prices, police crackdowns on groupie houses, and the arrival of the Kardashians spelled doom for the “little folk” in the Hamptons, says local paper.

“Between the cost of living, lack of entry-level professional jobs and an affordable housing void, the East End has blossomed into a playground for the rich and a gated community for everyone else,” wrote *Southampton Press* reporter Brandon Quinn Dec. 4.

Quinn’s article ran under a headline across the entire page that said, “Hamptons Party Scene FOUND DEAD.”

Focusing national attention on the East End of Long Island was the debut Nov. 9 of “Kourtney & Khloe Take the Hamptons,” the latest in a series of cities being visited by the Kardashian family.

Heavy media coverage has accompanied the arrival of the Kardashians. The *New York Post* headlined: “Keep Them Out. Huffington Post headlined: “Nobody Took the Hamptons on the First ‘Kourtney & Khloe Take the Hamptons.’”

PR Firms Thrive in Hamptons

PR, which makes heavy use of celebrities, is well represented in the East End. Nine firms are listed in the “Yellow Pages” for East Hampton although the apparent largest one, Mullen & McCaffrey, founded in 1984, is not on the list.

Principals are John Mullen, former creative executive at Ogilvy & Mather Direct Response, and Mary Ann McCaffrey, former account supervisor at BBDO, Grey Advertising and Wells, Rich, Greene.

M&M has produced TV, radio and direct mail featuring Kathleen Turner, Alec Baldwin, Bill Joel, Dick Cavett, George Plimpton and other celebrities for businesses, non-profits and government agencies. The website gives a “partial” list of 32 current clients including A&P, Bravo, Newsday, CUNY, Southampton Hospital, NYS Dept. of Economic Development and Village of East Hampton.

Other PR firms listed include Word Hampton of E.H.; Kupcha Marketing Services, Bay Shore; Cordes PR South Beach; Communications Strategy Group, Smithtown; A&K Drinkwater PR, Greenport; Bruce Cohen Group, Water Mill; Courtney King PR, Southampton; Hicksville Minute Man Press, and Minuteman Press of Williston Park.

Jody Donohue for many years was one of the leading PR counselors in the East End. However, her car struck and killed social figure Angier Biddle Duke, 79, on April 30, 1995 while he was rollerblading in Southampton. She was not charged in the accident but sold her firm in 1997 to co-workers Joan Diegnan and Linda Mann, becoming a consultant. The only news medium that identified Donohue as the driver was the *New York Post*. *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, etc., carried extensive obits on Duke and descriptions of the accident but left out the name of the driver.

Given the penchant of celebrities and the rich for

privacy, there are no doubt other PR reps in the East End who don’t list themselves publicly. The insistence of the wealthy on privacy was covered in the January 2013 Harper’s by writer John P. Davidson who falsely identified himself in order to enroll in the Starkey School for servants.

22+ Nightclubs Closed

Quinn listed 22 nightclubs that have closed including Club Marakesh, Westhampton Beach, once the most popular nightclub on Long Island; Conscience Point Inn, where PR counselor Lizzie Grubman at 2 a.m. on July 7, 2001 crashed her Mercedes Benz SUV into a crowd of about 15; Neptune Beach Club, also known as “hotdog beach” for those in their late teens, and The Drift Inn, Danceteria, Le Mans, Tide Runners, Jet east, Mad Hatter, Pink Elephant, among others.

The list, wrote Quinn “is just a small portion of the once-beloved, equally-hated by some, and now-defunct Southampton Town nightclubs.”

Grubman, who served 38 days in solitary confinement, had pleaded guilty to certain charges. The incident touched off a tidal wave of criticism of life in the Hamptons led by stories in the *New York Post* and *New York News*. Quinn does not believe the Grubman incident “killed the Hamptons era of excess.” What it did was “turn the lights on,” he says.

He credits Grubman with “fighting town attorneys in the media for the right to party” as early as 1999. She represented Conscience Point Inn and Jet East. She stuck up for the two clubs as “code enforcement officers swarmed in and hit them with a collective \$13,000 in fines for noise and code violations,” writes Quinn.

Town Officials, Police Enforce Rules

Town officials and police have been so energetic in enforcing rules about share houses that there are now only five party-related code violations yearly, Town Attorney Tiffany Scarlato told Quinn. “There has been a shift away from the share house and toward corporate-sponsored, upscale events thrown at residential homes,” she said.

Newsday reported base pay and total pay of 49 East Hampton police officers ranging from base pay of \$142,341 and total pay of \$160,977 for Chief Edward Ecker down to base pay of \$84,582 and total pay of \$98,792 for officer Michael Selz.

Ex-police officers sometimes become elected officials. Conrad Teller, after serving 20 years as police chief of Southampton, then served ten years as police chief of Westhampton Beach after which he served ten years as mayor of W.H.B. until he was defeated this year by Maria Moore.

The *New York Post* rapped the severance package given to W.H.B. police chief Ray Dean when he retired June 30, the day before Moore was elected. His last pay of \$226,236, including extras, for supervising a force of 11, is more than *New York City* Police chief Bill Bratton makes for supervising a force of 34,500 officers, the *Post* noted.

– Jack O’Dwyer