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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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VIRGINIA ART INST. CALLS FOR PR PITCHES

Virginia Commonwealth University is on the hunt for an agency to develop a national and global PR push to establish and launch its Institute for Contemporary Art in Richmond.

The 31,000-student institution has been planning the \$37M ICA since 2014. A 41,000-square-foot, three-story building, it is scheduled to open in the fall of 2017 in downtown Richmond.



The project is part of the university's six-year strategic plan launched in 2011.

The school wants a firm to provide general counsel and strategy on PR and communications, media outreach and material development and similar PR tasks.

Proposals are due Feb. 4.

RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1PJ7Vg2>.

BEST WESTERN BOOKS J PR

Global hospitality chain Best Western Hotels & Resorts has booked J Public Relations for North American PR, following a re-branding in October.

Senior VP and chief marketing officer Dorothy Dowling said BW is poised for its biggest year ever for "awareness and reputation movement."

She liked J PR's fresh perspective and "impressive relationships."

Allison+Partners was the longtime incumbent.

J PR's mandate includes consumer-facing PR efforts, including the re-branding, executive positioning, its 70th anniversary, and support of its seven brands.

Jamie Lynn Sigler and Sarah Evans head the New York and San Diego-based firm.

CHERRY GROWERS REVIEW ASIA PR

The Northwest Cherry Growers, the marketing cooperative for Washington-grown cherries, peaches, nectarines and apricots, is searching for PR firms to target Europe and Asia.

The Yakima, Wash.-based group is eyeing foreign markets including Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines, for its fruit via five separate RFPs.

PR, trade and market promotions, industry outreach, and agricultural trade fairs, among other services are covered in the scope of work.

The resulting contract is expected to last one year.

Proposals are due Feb. 16.

RFPs: <http://odwpr.us/1TNjBjA>.

Boost your new business efforts.

Join the 2016 O'Dwyer's rankings.

Deadline for 2015 fee income: Fri., Feb. 26, 2016.



ABMAC AIDS WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT

Wounded Warrior Project, the veterans' aid organization under scrutiny for lavish spending, has engaged Abernathy MacGregor Group for PR counsel.

The *New York Times* Jan. 28 covered the organization's evolution from a "basement operation handing out backpacks" to a "fund-raising giant, taking in more than \$372 million in 2015." The paper's reporting on WWP's spending of millions of dollars on travel, dinners, hotels and conferences raised eyebrows for an organization that was previously unimpeachable in the public eye. Other media followed, including a three-part CBS series.



WWP's board said in a statement Feb. 1 that it "takes very seriously the concerns that have been raised in recent days" and is retaining independent advisors for a financial and policy review. "We remain steadfast in our commitment to our warriors and supporters and will ensure that the organization is effectively fulfilling this important mission," the group said.

Abernathy MacGregor CEO Tom Johnson is advising the group.

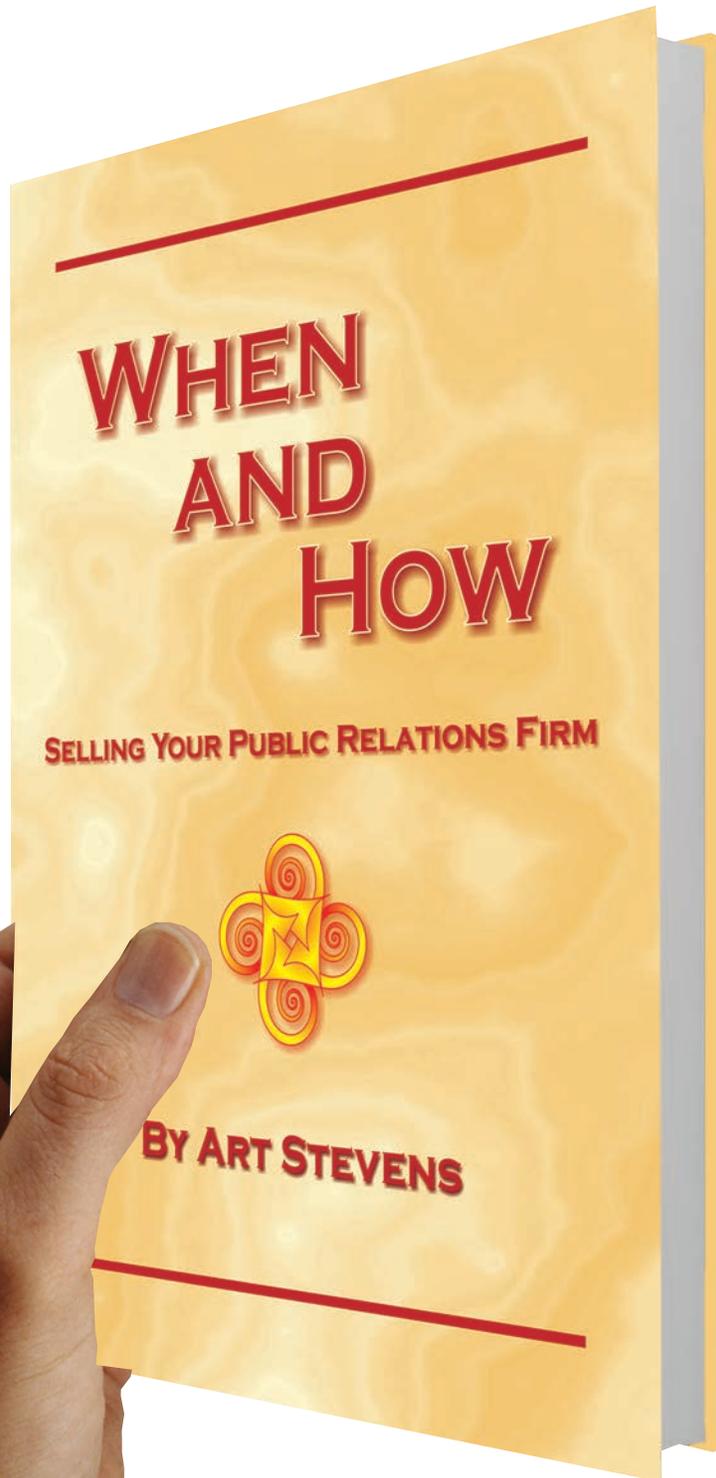
TENEO AIDS EOS IN BLISTER SUIT

EOS, the lip balm in an egg-shaped container that grew wildly popular from social media and celebrity endorsements, has engaged Teneo Strategy as it copes with fallout from class action lawsuits from customers who experienced blisters and other skin irritation after using the product.

High-profile plaintiff's attorney Mark Geragos represented the California woman who led the class-action suit, which was settled last week.

New York-based Teneo is guiding PR for the New York-based company amid the suit. In a statement, the company said its products are FDA approved and meet or exceed safety and quality standards. "We are pleased to announce that the class-action lawsuit brought against EOS earlier this month has been resolved," EOS said.

NOW AVAILABLE



“Essential reading for anyone contemplating selling an agency - or buying one.”

- Andy Hardie-Brown
Co-Founder/Global
COO Allison+Partners

“An excellent primer for all PR agency owners who are considering selling their firms”

- Steve Cody
Founding partner
and CEO Peppercomm

“Art Stevens provides an invaluable resource for entrepreneurial PR pros and students who want to start their own business and build it for acquisition.”

- Lynn Appelbaum,
Department of Media &
Communications Arts,
City College of New York

Available @ [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Available free of charge to public relations agency CEOs.
For a free copy E mail: art@theartstevensgroup.com

PODESTA DIRECTS DISH NETWORK

Government relations firm Heather Podesta + Partners, LLC in February registered its representation of satellite TV and Internet provider DISH Network.

The lobbying pact focuses on telecommunications issues relating to satellite broadband, wireless competition and spectrum management, as well as spectrum auctions, retransmission consent reform, and “video marketplace competition and merger and acquisition activity in the pay-TV industry.”

As of last year, Denver, CO-headquartered Dish Network provided service to nearly 14 million TV and 600,000 broadband subscribers.

Founder Charlie Ergen, who in 2011 handed over the title of President and CEO to Joseph Clayton, last year resumed that top role upon Clayton’s retirement.

The account will be managed by founder and prominent Democratic lobbyist Heather Podesta, who previously worked for representatives Earl Pomeroy (D, ND), Robert Matsui (D, CA) and Bill Bradley (D, MO), along with Jonathan Becker, former chief of staff to Senator Amy Klobuchar (D, MN); Robert Hoffman, former speechwriter for California Governor Pete Wilson and legislative director for senator Mike DeWine (R, OH); and Amy Swonger, former legislative assistant to Senator Trent Lott (R, MS) and deputy assistant to former Vice President Dick Cheney.



SARD, JF TAKE SIDES IN \$2.9B BID FOR AXIALL

Westlake Chemical Corp. has engaged Sard Verbinen & Co. and Mackenzie Partners to drum up

support for its \$20-per-share bid for Axiall Corp.



Axiall, which is working with Joele Frank on the PR front, has rejected the overture.

Westlake, a maker of petrochemicals and building products, said the deal is worth \$2.9B, including assumption of about \$1.5B in Axiall debt.

The company wants to diversify its operations with Axiall's building materials production.

Westlake said Axiall's board shot down the deal and has refused to engage in talks about the deal.

“We believe that Westlake’s proposal is an opportunistic attempt to take advantage of challenging public equity market conditions and significantly undervalues Axiall’s assets and its long-term prospects,” Timothy Mann, president and CEO, said in a statement.

Mann added that the company is committed to cutting \$100M in costs by the end of 2016 and is looking at a possible sale of its building products business.

FERGUSON FILLS COGNITO VP SLOT

Financial consultancy and technology communications firm Cognito has appointed Bill Ferguson as the agency's newest vice president.

Ferguson, whose background covers finance, financial technology and professional services, was previously a senior VP at FleishmanHillard, and also served as a senior consultant at advisory firm KPMG. Ferguson has also held executive roles at Havas’ Middleberg and Interpublic Group’s TSI.



Ferguson

As Cognito VP, Ferguson will work out of the agency’s New York office and will report to managing director Gregory Papajohn.

Papajohn in a statement referred to as Ferguson a “financial services and multi-disciplinary practitioner” who “brings exactly the portfolio of communications work in global, integrated and measurable campaigns that our clients expect and need to thrive in this time of socio-economic, technological, and media upheaval.”

New York-based Cognito was founded in 2000. The firm has additional offices in London, Los Angeles and Singapore.

BLACK & DECKER ISSUES RFP

China-based appliance manufacturer Midea Group is seeking a PR agency to initiate a U.S. marketing campaign to accompany the forthcoming launch of a Black & Decker upright vacuum product.

The RFP comes after a 2015 partnership that granted Midea development and manufacturing responsibilities for a series of indoor vacuums under the flagship of hardware and home products brand Black & Decker.

Midea is looking for a PR agency to provide an innovative marketing campaign that would elevate Black & Decker’s visibility among younger U.S. audiences.

The campaign’s primary focus would be digital, and the selected agency would be required to produce content for video-sharing sites such as YouTube.

The campaign would also include a social media component, and the hired agency would also be responsible for booking traditional media interviews.

Budget is set between \$150,000 and \$300,000. Proposals were due February 5.



MLB'S HECKELMAN SIGNS WITH FINSBURY

Jeff Heckelman, who led business PR for Major League Baseball, has signed with Finsbury as a VP.

Heckelman directed MLB PR efforts in areas like sponsorship, off-field PR for the World Series, the @MLB_PR Twitter feed, and the MLB Fan Cave.

His minor league stints in sports PR included coordinating PR for the US Tennis Association and servicing sports and sponsorship accounts at Edelman.

At WPP-owned Finsbury, he'll focus on sports and entertainment business.

NY TIMES PROFIT CLIMBS ON COST CUTTING

The New York Times Company saw net income jump nearly 48% in the fourth quarter to \$51.7M as lower costs and severance expenses offset flat revenues of \$444.7M.

The Times said operating costs fell 7.7% during the quarter to \$352.7M. It added 53,000 new paid digital subscribers in Q4, the most in three years.



Despite previous reductions, the company said it plans a "sweeping examination" of the newsroom to identify further areas for cost reductions.

Circulation revenues inched up 1.3% while ad revenues fell 1.3% during the quarter. Print ads fell 6.6% while digital ads climbed 10.6% to \$69.9M. Digital subscriptions climbed 13.3% in the fourth quarter worth \$50.4M.

President and CEO Mark Thompson called 2015 "a year of progress" for the Times, noting its virtual reality play, growth in its T Brand Studio and mobile, as well as digital growth.

For the year, revenues slipped 0.6% to just under \$1.6B. Digital ads rose 8.2% to \$197.1M. Print fell 8%.

The Times claims 1,094,000 digital-only subscribers as of the end of Q4, up 20% over Q4 of 2014.

TIMES SERPHOS TO LEAD PR AT REUTERS

Abbe Serphos, executive director of corporate communications for the New York Times Company, is decamping to Reuters for the global head of PR and communications slot later this month.

Serphos was PR director for the Times until moving up to her current role in 2010, serving as corporate spokeswoman and a senior strategist for the company.

She worked the agency realm at Rubenstein Associates and Vorhaus & Co. around seven years at the University of Miami before moving to the corporate side with Kraft Foods and Barnes & Noble.

**Serphos**

Serphos is slated to join Reuters on Feb. 22.

Eileen Murphy heads corporate communications for the Times Co.

KAPLOW LEADS CONTENT FOR SHEKNOWS

Susan Kaplow, executive VP of development and operations for Refinery29, has moved to SheKnows Media as chief content officer for the women's lifestyle group of properties.

Philippe Guelton, CEO, said, "Susan joins us a pivotal point for the brand in which we will focus on defining our content strategy."

Kaplow was VP/GM of Life and Style at the Huffington Post and executive director of web development for Conde Nast. She was previously VP of content at Alloy

Media + Marketing (Defy Media).

SheKnows recently locked up \$22M in financing from Ally Corporate Finance. Its sites include SheKnows.com, BlogHer.com and StyleCaster.com with 92.5M unique visitors in December.

UK'S COULSON HANGS PR SHINGLE

Andy Coulson, the former *News of the World* editor who served time in the News Corp. phone hacking scandal, has opened a PR firm.

Coulson, a former communications director for UK Prime Minister David Cameron, has gone into business with sports PR guru Henry Chappell as Coulson Chappell.

"With Andy's extensive experience across media and politics, and a growing demand from CEOs, companies and organisations for strategic corporate and communications advice, we feel there is a real opportunity to establish a new agency in the marketplace," Chappell said. Coulson added that he "always wanted to establish and grow my own company."

**Coulson**

The firm said it provides "discreet corporate strategy and communications advice, from a unique perspective, to leaders, companies and organisations."

Coulson was editor of *News of the World* from 2003-2007. He served 18 months for his role in the hacking scandal at the former paper.

HYUNDAI WINS AD SUPER BOWL

Hyundai's "First Date" Super Bowl ad won USA Today's annual ranking of top spots from the NFL's championship game.



The paper noted humor reined in this year's ad lineup. The Hyundai spot featured comedian Kevin Hart as an overprotective father.

Heinz took second place honors for an ad featuring dachshunds wearing hot-dog costumes running across a meadow. A spot for Doritos featuring a couple expecting a baby placed third.

USA Today's 28-year-old "Ad Meter" is a closely watched marker of advertising's biggest day. The paper noted 30-second spots cost advertisers \$5M this year, up from \$4.4M a year ago.

TRUMP REWRITING POLITICAL PR

By Ronn Torossian

One longstanding, unwritten rule in political public relations has always been “don’t bite the hand that feeds you.” In other words, play nice with the media.

This year, however, “the corporate media” has often found itself a target of ire from candidates looking to score points with their respective bases.

Several GOP candidates made attacking the “mainstream media” a central point of their campaigns.

Hillary Clinton’s camp has taken shots at Fox recently, as well as other conservative radio and internet sites. But no one has gone as far as Donald Trump.

Trump started off with a bang, getting combative with Fox’s Megyn Kelly in an early debate last fall. He continued to attack her after the debate on social media, revving up his followers to a fever pitch. When he skipped out on a national debate in January hosted by GOP-friendly Fox, he took the disdain for media one step further.

In the week leading up to the debate, there was really only one story: would Donald show or not? He said probably not; his aides said definitely not. CNN, Fox and other networks said everything they possibly could for or against him.

Talking heads discussed, debated, and pontificated, and every time they mentioned his name, Trump’s PR stock went up.

In an era when media PR is an around-the-clock business, Trump managed to make an event “about him” by saying he didn’t plan to be there.

There’s fashionably late and there are polite refusals, but Trump took no-showing to an entirely different level. Let’s face it, Trump has played the media masterfully this election cycle, and this part of his symphony may just be his magnum opus.

When your primary goal is to make your PR about you, rule number-one is “keep them talking about you.” It doesn’t really matter what they say. Trump understands, especially in politics, that name recognition is huge.

Think about it. How many people have been elected to the Senate on that aspect alone? Now Trump, who specializes in over-the-top performance art, aims for an even higher office. He’s trying to talk about himself right into the Presidency.

And he may just do it.

Ronn Torossian is the CEO & Founder of 5W Public Relations. 5WPR is headquartered in NYC with offices in Los Angeles and Denver.

**TOP PR AGENCY WEBSITES: WHO'S FASTEST?**

By Stephen Baldwin

Google has been using website load performance as a ranking criteria since 2010. And as of May 2015, more searches now take place on mobile devices than on desktop computers in 10 nations, including the U.S., according to Google.

So the advantages of having a fast-loading, “mobile-friendly” website are key, especially in a highly competitive industry such as PR.

Which major PR agency websites are fastest on mobile? Which are fastest on desktop? And which sites achieved a perfect (100) score on Google’s Mobile Usability test?

See the results below after websites of the top 100 PR firms as ranked by O’Dwyer’s were put through Google’s PageSpeed Insights tool.

Top 5 Winners: Mobile Page Speed

1. Blaze PR, 87
2. DKC, 84
3. The Hoffman Agency, 77
4. Allison+Partners, 76
5. Maxwell PR, 75

Top 5 Winners: Desktop Page Speed

1. APCO Worldwide, 98
2. DKC, 94
3. The Hoffman Agency, 90
4. SSPR, 87
5. Maxwell PR, 85

Agency sites achieving a 100 (perfect) score on Google’s Mobile User Experience Test:

1. DKC
2. GYMR Public Relations
3. Jarrard Inc.
4. WE
5. Allison+Partners
6. Cashman+Katz
7. Cooney/Waters Unlimited
8. Gregory FCA
9. Horn Group
10. IW Group
11. O’Malley Hansen
12. SparkPR
13. ReviveHealth
14. W2O Group
15. Fahlgen Mortine

Life in the Fast Lane

In many cases, installing a caching plugin can improve website performance, such as W3 Super Cache for WordPress.

A CDN (Content Delivery Network) can speed things up too or try installing software that can minimize (“minify”) site images and other resources.

Firms can test out their own websites (and others) here: <https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/>

Stephen Baldwin is Editor-in-Chief at Didit Communications.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS

MPRM ADDS LATINO PRACTICE

Entertainment firm MPRM Communications, Los Angeles, has hired Inma Carbajal-Fogel to head a new Hispanic multicultural marketing and public relations practice, ¡HOLA! MPRM.

Carbajal-Fogel has handled Hispanic campaigns for clients like Universal's "Ted" and "Ted 2," "Bridesmaids," and "Despicable Me" and "Despicable Me 2," as well as Disney Consumer Products, Chef Merito, Gaviña Coffee, and Azteca America.

Mark Pogachefsky, president, MPRM, said Carbajal-Fogel's broad range of experience means that the new practice will be available across all of the firms' practice offerings like film, television and home entertainment to digital media, performing arts and consumer products.



Carbajal-Fogel

BASSETT & BASSETT MAKES INDIA INROADS

Detroit-based professional services agency Bassett & Bassett Communication Managers and Counselors has gone global with the addition of a new location in Pune, India.

Bassett's Asia Pacific footprint will be led by Vidya Moorthy, who now holds the title of managing director. Moorthy, an India native, was previously vice president of client services at the agency's Detroit location.

Moorthy opens the Pune office with two communication managers/counselors and a production associate. The office currently has three India-based clients: a chain of fitness centers, a national professional services firm specializing in K-12 education and a Mumbai-based automotive manufacture.

Bassett Chairman and CEO Leland Bassett said the move "strengthens our unique multicultural and ethnic strategic communication capabilities seamlessly across the globe."

Pune has recently emerged as one of India's booming cultural capitals and fastest growing cities. The city is now a major hub for IT startups and banks, and boasts a strong manufacturing sector. Bassett & Bassett has maintained professional representation in that city since 2009.

The agency also recently unveiled professional representation in Beirut, Lebanon. Nasser M. Beydoun, previously head of the American Arab Chamber of Commerce, is now the agency's Middle East managing director.

WMA PUBLISHES BANKERS REPORT

William Mills Agency, Atlanta, has published its 13th annual financial industry research report, Bankers as Buyers 2016.

The financial communications firm said this year's focus is on the "invisible" customer as banks do more business with customers through digital means and contact center channels rather than face-to-face interactions.

The full report can be downloaded at <http://info.williammills.com/bankers-as-buyers-2016>.

NEW ACCOUNTS

New York Area

MoJJo Collaborative Communications, New

York/Suji's Korean Cuisine, ready-to-eat meals recently launched in US at Costco, HEB and other supermarkets, for PR.

The Brandman Agency, New York/Rome Cavalieri, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, five-star Rome hotel built in 1963, for PR.

Spring O'Brien & Co., New York/Eurail Group, the Netherlands-based rail pass company, to promote European train travel to North American audiences. Eurail markets and sells a variety of passes and tickets for railroad travel through 28 countries in Europe, including its world-famous "Eurail pass," which can be purchased only by non-European residents. Owned by Europe's rail and shipping carriers, the Utrecht-headquartered company was founded in 2001 and sells more than 330,000 Eurail passes each year. Eurail currently has three North America distributors: ACP Travel, STA Travel and Rail Europe. As Eurail's North American agency of record, Spring O'Brien will now provide PR and marketing support for the company and its rail products throughout North America, communicating with key media to promote the passes as well as the experience of European travel.

Tartaglia Communications, Somerset, N.J./IPRO, New York-based leader of the Atlantic Quality Innovation Network, for design and implementation of comms. plans for two initiatives funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

East

SevenTwenty Strategies, Washington, D.C./American Association of Nurse Practitioners, as AOR for the trade group of more than 66,000 members and 200 organizations, the nation's largest professional organization dedicated to advancing policy and advocating on behalf of America's nurses. The association, which also publishes professional journal the Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, was formed in 2013 after the merger of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners and the American College of Nurse Practitioners. SevenTwenty Strategies will handle advertising, PR and strategic communications outreach for AANP for the purpose of telling the association's story and highlighting nurse practitioners' role in America's healthcare system.

Southwest

Amendola Communications, Scottsdale, Ariz./Aprima Medical Software, healthcare information technology, for PR and content creation services.

West

JMPR Public Relations, Woodland Hills, Calif./Foose Design, Inc., as AOR for the automotive design and fabrication company that makes custom hot rod vehicles for auto aficionados. JMPR will drive media relations and offer brand building counsel to highlight the company's authority within the automotive and design world.

Murphy O'Brien PR, Los Angeles/Gibson International, L.A.-based, invitation-only luxury real estate brokerage company, as AOR for PR and partnerships.

NEWS OF SERVICES

CISION ENHANCES PR EDITION PLATFORM

Chicago-based industry software giant Cision on Thursday revealed several major upgrades to its PR platform, designed to improve efficiencies in engagement tracking for communicators and allow better content monitoring and access capabilities.

Cision vice president of product management Natalia Dykyj told O'Dwyer's that the newly unveiled features "will help communication professionals streamline their workflow and understand who is affecting their bottom line and brand reputation."



The upgrade, available on the Cision PR Edition platform, includes an expanded Twitter profile engagement feature, allowing users to access and record conversations made over that social networking service.

An additional Google Analytics tracking feature lets users link accounts from that web analytics service directly to the platform, which can improve media outlet tracking by allowing users to analyze and measure traffic sources.

The upgrade also offers improved monitoring services, allowing users to integrate third-party content into Cision PR Edition, and showcases the company's newly expanded news monitoring offerings: Cision recently executed a licensing agreement with the Tribune Content Agency that now allows users to view in the company's signature PR platforms the entire text of more than 80 newspapers.

Premium services offerings, such as a "rapid response" feature that alerts client service teams to high-priority requests, and a daily, customizable news briefs feature, are also available.

The updated platform follows a busy period for the software company.

Cision in December bought PR Newswire for a reported \$841 million, which followed its \$300 million acquisition of media database service Gorkana in 2014 and its \$446.5 million bid for PR and marketing software provider Vocus the same year.

Cision in October revealed a similar platform upgrade that saw the addition of influencer search and access features, as well as mobile capabilities and premium profiles supplied by Gorkana.

"Communication professionals need help making meaningful, one-on-one relationships with influencers to ensure their story gets significant coverage in the media," Dykyj told O'Dwyer's. "Cision's Data Science team has introduced influencer insights, audience demographics, relationship management and conversion tracking tools, giving clients information about the people who affect their campaign, and new opportunities to find influencers that can help expand their reach. By using our relationship management tools to get a full view of the conversations your PR team, social media manager, and marketing teams are having with your most important influencers."

PEOPLE

Joined

Jeff Hentz, managing partner and chief strategist, Catalyst Destinations International, to Finn Partners, New York, as a partner in its travel and lifestyle practice. He was previously president and CEO of the Daytona Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau and was chairman of Visit California's High Sierra Tourism Council. He also held travel marketing leadership roles at Ocean Club Cruises, Destination Yosemite, Tourism Marketing Consultants, United Vacations and Disney's Premier Cruise Lines.



Hentz

Dan Sweet, senior VP and specialized in healthcare and policy, FleishmanHillard, to JPA Health Communications, Washington, D.C., as a VP. He was assistant director of scientific comms. at the American Society for Clinical Oncology, where he managed media, and was managing director at CLS Strategies, as well as a VP at Weber Shandwick unit Powell Tate.



Sweet

Promoted

Judy Lee to VP, Development Counselors International, New York. Lee, who joined DCI in 2012, was account director for the agency's economic development unit. Prior to DCI, she was a VP at Rubenstein PR, senior director at HL Group, and A/S at Spring O'Brien. Her current clients at DCI include The Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce, Columbus 2020 and Greater Phoenix Economic Council.

Cristina Iglecio and **Mariana Villarreal** to regional executive directors, JeffreyGroup, Miami. Iglecio, who joined in 2008, was Brazil managing director, based in São Paulo office. She is now president of JeffreyGroup Brazil. Villarreal joined in 2010 and was Mexico managing director. She is now charged with guiding planning and development for the agency's client markets in that region, and has also been named JeffreyGroup chief strategy officer for Spanish-speaking markets.



Iglecio

Mauricio Gutierrez succeeds her as managing director.

Marina Stenos to senior VP and partner, Widmeyer Communications, Washington, D.C. She joined in 2011 and is a STEM communications expert who was previously director of the



Stenos, Zaentz

Center for Public Awareness, Leadership and Diversity at the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. **Rachel Zaentz**, who joined in 2010 and is an expert in early childhood education comms., was upped to VP in the agency's PreK-12 education practice. Widmeyer is part of Finn Partners.

BRUNSWICK REMAINS M&A PR KING

Brunswick Group retained its grip as the top global M&A PR advisor in 2015 by number of deals and deal value, representing 209 transactions worth nearly \$1T in a year dubbed the biggest for M&A ever.

Brunswick surpassed FTI Consulting (188), Sard Verbinnen & Co (137), Joele Frank (133) and Kekst and Company (124) by deal count, according to mergermarket's league tables.

Global League table by value



Rank		Company name	2015	
2015	2014		Value (US\$m)	Deal Count
1	1	Brunswick Group	973,776	209
2	2	Joele Frank Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher	558,462	133
3	4	Finsbury	407,543	74
4	6	Kekst (Publicis/MSLGROUP)	400,480	124
5	3	Sard Verbinnen & Co	357,956	137
6	17	Edelman	298,821	84
7	5	Abernathy MacGregor Group (AMO)	193,451	61
8	8	FTI Consulting	160,072	188
9	27	Tulchan Communications	72,311	60
10	12	Hering Schuppener Consulting (AMO)	65,612	36
11	19	Citigate	41,610	87
12	20	Weber Shandwick Worldwide	39,418	39
13	55	Prosek Partners	30,491	36
14	26	Hill+Knowlton Strategies	29,083	23
15	14	Maitland (AMO)	29,014	65
16	22	Longview Communications	28,716	14
17	29	Owen Blacksilver Public Relations	24,683	54
18	24	Bell Pottinger Financial & Corporate	21,391	46
19	30	Greenbrook Communications	20,145	33
20	64	Powerscourt	18,689	21

By value, Brunswicks' nearly \$974B total was up 80 percent over the prior year and easily surpassed Joele Frank (\$558B), Finsbury (\$408B), Kekst (\$401B), and Sard Verbinnen (\$358B).

Making strong gains by deal value were No. 6 Edelman (up from No. 17 in 2014 with \$299B across 84 deals), No. 9 Tulchan Communications (up from No. 27 with \$72.3B and 60 deals), No. 11 Citigate (up from 19 with \$41.6B and 87 deals), No. 12 Weber Shandwick (up from 20 with \$39.4B and 39 deals), No. 13 Prosek Partners (up from 55 with \$30.4B and 36 deals), and No. 14 Hill+Knowlton Strategies (up from 26 with \$29B and 23 deals).

Brunswick senior partner Steve Lipin called 2015 a "strong year for M&A as many of our clients engaged in important strategic transactions." He added that 2016 is off to a strong start, as well.

M&A activity in 2015 topped \$5B, a record for deals according to Dealogic.

IPREX SIGNS ON SPM

Global PR network IPREX has signed its newest partner, Dallas-based agency SPM Communications, Inc.

SPM, which specializes in food/beverage, crisis and lifestyle communications, was founded in 1999 and maintains a second office in Austin. Agency clients include Fiesta Restaurant Group, P.F. Chang's, Bruegger's Bagels, Stubb's Legendary Bar-B-Q, Van's International Foods, Main Event Entertainment, Newk's Eatery, Austin Footwear Labs and Boulder Organic.

The agency in 2014 accounted for more than \$2.5 million in net fees, according to O'Dwyer's rankings of

PR firms. IPREX, which holds its administrative offices in Milwaukee, now has more than 70 agency partners in nearly 120 offices worldwide. Other U.S. agency partners include French/West/Vaughan, Fineman PR, Fahlgren Mortine and Makovsky.

RITTENHOUSE REPS NEO@OGILVY IN TOKYO

Neo@Ogilvy, the global media agency and marketing network owned by Ogilvy & Mather, has appointed David Rittenhouse to serve as representative director.

Rittenhouse since 2014 has been managing director of Neo@Ogilvy's Tokyo office. A founding member of Neo@Ogilvy's New York location, he joined the agency when it was established in 2006.

As representative director, Rittenhouse now joins Ogilvy & Mather Japan's executive committee and will help guide the team's performance and growth strategy in that region.

Ogilvy & Mather Japan president Todd Krugman said Rittenhouse "embodies everything that is great about Ogilvy" and "has made a significant positive impact on the growth of the business in Japan since he joined."

Neo@Ogilvy, which offers digital media support for the marketing company's global properties, now holds more than 1,000 employees and 40 offices worldwide.

JAWSKI JOINS PN'S REP. MANAGE. PRACTICE

Porter Novelli has appointed Greg Jawski to the role of senior vice president of the agency's reputation management practice, as part of a bid to widen the Omnicom global PR unit's foothold in that sector.

Jawski comes to Porter Novelli from JCPR, where he was managing director and general manager of that agency's New York office. Prior to that he was a senior VP at Emanate PR, where he oversaw programs focused on mortgage outreach and retail banking. He also served as vice president in Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide's financial services and corporate practice, and was a VP in Fleishman-Hillard's financial services group.

Jawski will now counsel PN's corporate affairs clients and help the agency expand its offerings in the reputation management sector. He will be based out of the agency's 7 World Trade Center headquarters, and will report to PN partner and New York managing director Darlan Monterisi.

MIKE PAUL IS ADVISOR TO STATUS LABS

Status Labs, with offices in New York, Austin and Sao Paulo, has added New York counselor Mike Paul to its board as an advisor.

"Mike is one of the most notable figures in our industry and we look forward to learning from his expert knowledge, network and proven crisis strategies" said Darius Fisher, president.

Status Labs clients include Fortune 500 brands, politicians, athletes and other public figures. It has been featured in media including the *New York Times*, *Daily Beast*, *Yahoo!*, *DuJour*, *The Observer* and *US News & World Report*.

Paul is president of Reputation Doctor, handling crisis management, reputation, corporate communications, government relations and litigation support.

The 5G routers that Time Warner, Comcast, Cablevision, etc., are requiring that customers install have powerful Wi-Fi features that should be disabled, say those who believe that hard-wired phones and computers are safer than wireless.

“Protect Your Family from EMF Pollution,” a website operated by “Jeromy,” says that blanketing the U.S. with pulse-modulated wireless tech will proceed unimpeded “until the tide of public opinion shifts” on the health issues raised by the technology.

“The best thing you can do is protect your family and friends by limiting what you are exposed to,” advises EMFanalysis.

RF meters that measure the radiation should be used monthly because the companies do a system-wide reset once a month that may turn the Wi-Fi back on.

This reporter, as required by Time Warner, installed an Arris TG1672 GD2-5G router in our apartment two months ago. It was much bigger than the previous modem, sporting seven blue lights including ones that said 2.4GHz and 5GHz.

New Routers Criticized

The 5G function is especially bad says EMFanalysis because it radiates an increased number of electromagnetic “waves.” A call to TW resulted in the lights for 2.4GHz and 5GHz being turned off and assurances given that Wi-Fi had been disabled.

Comcast, which lost its \$45 billion bid to acquire TW last year, TW later selling to Charter Communications for \$55B, has installed about one million Xfinity routers that act as a gateway into the “smart home” of customers and deliver Wi-Fi service to anyone within a few hundred feet, says EMFanalysis.

The devices are to go into eight million homes.

People who live in apartment buildings could have four to eight of these powerful Xfinity transmitters within 50 feet of where they sleep, says EMFanalysis. Insomnia, headaches, muscle spasms and other symptoms may be experienced.

Cablevision, Bethpage, Long Island, which is being purchased along with Newsday for \$17 billion by the French company Altice, is replacing all its modems with the new higher-powered routers.

Multiple Antennas on Routers

EMFanalysis says that “Unlike previous generations of Wi-Fi routers, that are now at least two and possibly four antennas within the Xfinity routers. One antenna is the typical Wi-Fi frequency of 2.4 GHz and a second antenna emits microwave radiation at 5.0 GHz. There are also two channels within each antenna—a private channel for your home and a public channel for any Comcast customers who is visiting or walking by. More antennas and channels mean more microwave radiation exposure for people in the vicinity of the router.”

The site says EMF consultants are finding much higher readings with the new routers. “The 5.0 GHz transmission is particularly harmful to human biology,” it says. The shorter wavelength is the exact length to res-

onate with certain structures in the brain and other organs. The ongoing installation of 7,500 wireless terminals that will replace telephone booths in New York will be discussed by Dan Doctoroff, CEO of Sidewalk Labs, Feb. 10 at a public event.

Petitions Being Circulated

Critics of the project are collecting signatures on petitions to be sent to the New York Attorney General and the New York State Dept. of Technology and Telecommunications.

“Wireless disrupts cellular communications, damages immune and nervous systems, desynchronizes brain and heart rhythms, and causes headaches, sleep problems, ringing in the ears, anxiety and a host of other health problems,” said Sandi Maurer, director of the EMF Safety Network.

The terminals violate the Americans with Disabilities Act, the New York City Human Rights Law and the New York State Human Rights Law by subjecting citizens to unwanted radiation, say the forms.

Doctoroff, former CEO of Bloomberg and former Deputy Mayor of New York for Economic Development and Rebuilding, is described by CUSP as “One of the world’s leading visionaries and champion of leveraging technology and data for social change.”

He will talk “about the coming technological revolution in cities and how local governments across the globe are poised to use advanced connective technology to drastically improve people’s lives and solve some of society’s most pressing issues.”

Sidewalk Labs, announced June 10, 2015, by Doctoroff and Google, is moving from One MetroTech to 10 Hudson Yards on the West Side where it will occupy 67,000 sq. ft. in the 52-story building at West 30th st. and Tenth ave. No date has been given for the move.

RF health advocates say special concern must be shown to children, babies and expectant mothers. The thinner skulls of those under 13 make them more susceptible to damage, they say, quoting the Bioinitiative Institute and other sources. They are concerned about “baby monitors” that are put in cribs that provide live video feed and Wi-Fi connectivity or on the clothing of infants. They are concerned about office workers and particularly secretaries who may sit next to the office Wi-Fi base station and wonder why they have headaches, twitching muscles, fatigue, inability to concentrate, anxiety and other problems.

Hyper-sensitive people get off elevators if others pull out cell phones. They can’t enter buildings that have Wi-Fi capability. A hyper-sensitive person asked a building to turn off the Wi-Fi while she was there for an event and the building official refused, saying that to turn off the Wi-Fi would be admitting there is a problem. Those afflicted with this condition say it developed after exposure to excessive radiation.

They are also concerned about people who live in apartment buildings where several apartments nearby may have powerful Wi-Fi routers. — *Jack O’Dwyer*