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O'Dwyer's Newsletter



**The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications**

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FTI'S PR UNIT POSTS 8% Q4 REV. GROWTH

FTI Consulting's strategic communications group registered eight percent growth in Q4 revenues to \$54.3M, powered by robust performances in Europe, Middle East and Africa. Operating income fell 24.9 percent to \$4.8M.

Mark McCall, stratcomm chief, told *O'Dwyer's* that London showed impressive gains in retainers, transactions and deal volume.

He said FTI cemented linkages between Frankfurt, Paris and Brussels to position for the post-Brexit world.

US business perked up following a slow first half, a period when spending PA and government relations clients held back spending to take a measure of actions from the White House.

For the full year, the stratcomm unit revenues inched ahead 0.7 percent to \$192.5M, while operating profit slid 43.1 percent to \$13.1M.

McCall, who took over from Ed Reilly in September, expects to build on Q4 revenue momentum to achieve solid gains in 2018. "We're firing on all cylinders," he said.

FTI Consulting registered a 5.8 percent rise in Q4 revenues to \$467.7M. It earned \$66.9M (which includes a \$44.9M Tax Act benefit) vs. \$7.1M a year ago.



Mark McCall

LAKE JUMPS INTO NAHIGIAN STRATEGIES

Veteran PA executive Jim Lake has joined Nahigian Strategies as principal at the Washington-based full-service strategic communications firm.

Lake, who has more than 30 years of communications experience, was US PA practice chair at Burson-Marsteller (2002-2008), where he handled the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's high-profile campaign to introduce the redesigned colored currency into circulation.

He also served for eight years though the Reagan/Bush and Bush/Quayle administrations in posts at the Commerce Dept. and International Trade Administration dealing with global export strategies.

Lake also held top jobs at McBee Strategic, Gibraltar Assocs. and DDC Advocacy.

Keith Nahigian, who consulted at the Dept. Homeland Security and Dept. of Health and Human Services before launching his firm, expects Lake to use his political savvy and extensive experience in the public and private sectors to build his firm's client base.



Jim Lake

Boost New Biz Efforts, Join O'Dwyer's Rankings

Your ranking will be [posted on odwyerpr.com](http://www.odwyerpr.com) and you can use it in new business pitches. Clients have come to rely on firms in the O'Dwyer rankings. [Download ranking instructions PDF](#). **Deadline to submit: Fri., Mar. 2**

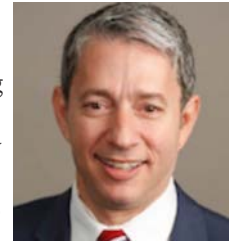
D S SIMON LAUNCHES SOCIAL VIDEO SERVICE

The New York-based firm's Social Media LIVE service is designed to increase clients' campaign reach by offering live, broadcast-quality multi-channel social streaming content of live events, branded content and social press conferences.

D S Simon Media CEO Doug Simon told *O'Dwyer's* that live video streaming is one of the fastest growing marketing channels out there, and the reach of live video streaming is quickly proving a valuable service to business.

Branded live-streaming is increasingly integrated into YouTube and organizations' Twitter strategies, and Facebook users now view Facebook Live video three times more than pre-recorded video, two years after that service was launched. Live video now receives triple the engagement of pre-recorded video, according to research by Forrester.

"Social Media allows you to engage with multiple influencers at once and also reach their audiences simultaneously. There's a multiplier effect," Simon said.



Doug Simon

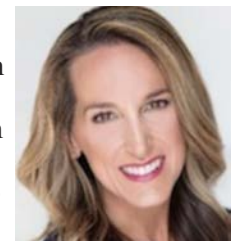
FH PICKS PETERSON TO HEAD BRAND MKTG.

FleishmanHillard has appointed Candace Peterson to the role of global managing director of brand marketing.

Peterson fills a role at the agency that had been vacant for several years.

Peterson, who joined the Omnicom unit in 2014 as executive creative director, was previously stationed with Dallas-based ad shop The Marketing Arm, where she led consumer engagement and new business. Prior to that, she was executive creative director of global consumer engagement at Omnicom ad agency TracyLocke. She previously held art director roles at Ogilvy & Mather and J. Walter Thompson.

As global managing director of brand marketing, Peterson is charged with connecting brand specialists across FH's global network to bring ideas and marketing insights to clients on a real-time basis. She'll be stationed in FH's Dallas office.



Candace Peterson

MALDIVES RELIES ON TRUMP-TIED FIRM FOR PR

The Indian Ocean island nation of Maldives has hired Ballard Partners for a one-year \$600K program to build support from US policymakers.

Maldives is in the grip of a crisis following its declaration of a state of emergency and a crackdown on political opponents, media and its judiciary.

The United Nations on Feb. 7 urged Maldives president Abdulla Yameen to end the state of emergency and criticized his actions as “tantamount to an all-out assault on democracy.”

The Maldives Marketing and PR Corp., which is funded by the government, is looking for Ballard Partners to provide strategic consulting and advocacy services with the US government.

Brian Ballard, a Republican fundraiser, chaired the Trump Victory organization in Florida during the 2016 presidential campaign.



Brian Ballard

APCO PUSHES POLISH INVESTMENT

APCO Worldwide has lined up work from the Polish Development Fund to promote US investment and economic development assistance for Poland.

The Government of Poland owns and finances PDF, which is supervised by the Ministry of Economic Development.

APCO president Evan Kraus and a PDF representative signed a letter of authorization to begin work on the project. The DC firm will provide strategic counsel, media relations and PR services.



Evan Kraus

A formal contract is in the works.

The *New York Times* (Feb 20) reported that Poland’s nationalist government is increasingly at odds with the European Union, which finances 60 percent of the country’s public investment.

Poland is to receive nine percent of the EU budget (\$105B) from 2014 to 2020.

The EU has warned Poland that it risks “a serious breach” of its commitment to shared values of liberal democracy and the rule of law, which member states have sworn to uphold, according to NYT.

BRIEF: WNYC, New York City’s public radio station, is acquiring the Gothamist news site that was closed in November by billionaire Joe Ricketts, founder of TD Ameritrade.

Financed by two anonymous donors, WNYC’s deal covers the Gothamist’s archives, domain name and social media assets. Public radio stations KPCC (Pasadena) and WAMU (Washington) are buying Gothamist’s local sites in their respective markets. Laura Walker, WNYC president, called the Gothamist a source of trusted news.

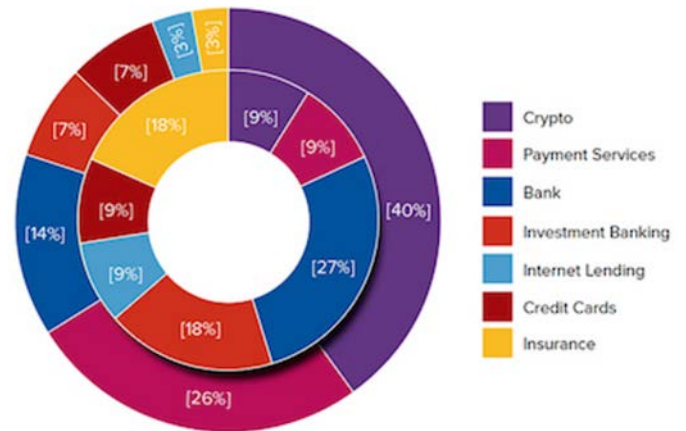


CRYPTOCURRENCY IS SOCIAL GOLD MINE

Cryptocurrencies have quickly become some of the most talked about financial services brands on social media, but mixed public perception and a lack of trust in digital currencies and blockchain technologies remain potential barriers to their future adoption, according to a **report released by social intelligence group NetBase**.

NetBase’s annual report, which examined the trends and overall performances of financial services companies across social channels, highlights both cryptocurrencies’ meteoric rise in popularity as well as the realities of how that newfound awareness contrasts with current consumer opinion.

Even though cryptocurrencies comprised only nine percent of all the brands in NetBase’s analysis this year, it was responsible for 40 percent of the total social media conversation volume surrounding all financial services brands, beating every other financial category in the report, including banks, credit cards, investment banking, internet lending, payment services and insurance companies.



Share of conversation volume (outside) versus category representation share (inside) for financial services brands.

By contrast, insurance brands made up 18 percent of the overall conversations covered in the report but represented only three percent of the total conversation volume. Banks comprised 27 percent of the brands included in this year’s list but represented only 14 percent of conversation volume. Investment banks made up 18 percent of the brands researched for the report, but represented only seven percent of the share of voice.

For the first time in the report’s history, two cryptocurrencies — Bitcoin and Ethereum — also made their way into NetBase’s top 10 Brand Passion Index for financial services brands on social media.

According to NetBase, American Express took the number-one spot. Paypal took second place, followed by newcomers Bitcoin and investment advisor Vanguard, which took third and fourth, respectively. Goldman Sachs took fifth, followed by Ethereum, Samsung Pay, payment service Square, bank UBS and VISA.

When it comes to trust among consumers, however, cryptocurrencies leave much room for improvement. Bitcoin ranked second-to last in terms of trust in NetBase’s

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CRYPTOCURRENCY IS SOCIAL GOLD MINE

(Continued from pg. 2)

Brand Passion Index, above only Goldman Sachs. Fellow altcoin brand Ethereum ranked seventh.

Cryptocurrencies also scored below average in terms of net sentiment, which averages both the positive and negative consumer opinions of a brand. At 49.8 out of a possible 100, crypto ranked behind payment services, investment banking, insurance companies and Internet lending services.

Digital currency Bitcoin in December crossed the \$17,000 barrier for the first time, having more than doubled in value since the beginning of November. The total cryptocurrency market now accounts for a year-over-year increase of about 3,400 percent — or about \$563 billion — according to industry site CoinMarketCap.

NetBase's "Social Media Industry Report 2018: Financial Services" analyzed the volume of conversation, awareness, reach, net sentiment and brand passion of 55 popular banks and financial services brands. Analysis ran throughout 2017.

IPR CITES FAKE NEWS AMONG TOP PR INSIGHTS

Digital literacy, brand positioning and the effects of fake news and social media are among the topics addressed in the Institute for Public Relations' list of the [Top 11 Public Relations Research Insights for 2017](#).

The list, compiled by IPR director of research Sarab Kochhar, puts the spotlight on research studies, from such sources as the Pew Research Center and the Public Affairs Council, that were judged to have had the greatest impact on the PR profession.

The #1 spot on the list is occupied by a study about the gap between the digital transformation of society and the ability

of businesses to adequately incorporate that transformation into their operational models. Conducted by Altimeter, a Prophet Company, the study surveyed 500 executives and digital strategists to find out how both employees and management of companies are being equipped to meet the digital challenge.

Coming in at #2 was a report from WE Communications on how brands need to consider external factors when they are trying to plot their development and motion in a particular market. By soliciting the opinions of 3,000 consumers and 1,000 B2B decision-makers, the study constructs what it calls a "motion matrix" to help brands balance the forces a brand exerts with the pressure that outside events are placing on it.

Other studies on the list address on such topics as a widening gender gap, the ambivalent relationship that Americans have with automation and the low level of trust people have that companies will behave ethically.

IPR is a non-profit organization that is based at the University of Florida. It has been compiling its survey of top PR research insights since 2014.



PADILLA'S RAPER TO RETIRE

Padilla chief counsel officer and former president Mark Raper will retire this month, the agency reported.

As managing partner of Richmond, VA-based ad agency Earle Palmer Brown, Raper in 1996 led a group of employees to purchase EPB's PR operations to form Carter Ryley Thomas, where Raper was named chairman and CEO. The agency was named after the three principals' young children, including Mark's eldest daughter, Carter.



Mark Raper

In 2005, Raper led CRT's acquisition of New York-based consumer PR specialist Patrice Tanaka & Co., forming CRT/tanaka. That agency **was acquired in 2013** by Minneapolis-based Padilla Speer Beardsley to form PadillaCRT, where Raper was named president.

Raper began his PR career in the healthcare industry, serving as public relations director of a Charter Medical-owned hospital in Richmond and later, as a marketing and PR director for Sentara Health Systems in Norfolk.

He later held a four-year stint as PR director at Ford & Westbrook, Inc., and three years as corporate communications and marketing manager for conglomerate Figgie International. He joined EPB in 1988.

Padilla in 2016 **acquired food and nutrition communications and consulting shop FoodMinds**, establishing it as one of the largest independent food and beverage agencies in the country.

Last year, **PadillaCRT rebranded as Padilla**. Raper stepped down from the role of president and assumed a chief counsel officer position. **Matt Kucharski succeeded Raper** in the president role.

The agency now staffs 240 and maintains offices in Minneapolis, New York, Chicago, Richmond, Washington, D.C., San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Raper was awarded the Thomas Jefferson Award of Excellence in Public Relations by the Richmond Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America and Ernst & Young's Regional Entrepreneur of the Year in the Business and Consulting Category.

"Throughout his career, Mark has given everything of himself to the industry, his community and the company that became Padilla," Padilla CEO Lynn Casey told *O'Dwyer's*. "He's earned his beach, and we wish him the best in his new journey."

Padilla is now one of the largest independently-owned PR and communications firms in the U.S. as **ranked by O'Dwyer's**, accounting for more than \$42.4 million in net fees in 2016.

BRIEF: The Atlantic, bucking the media cutback wave, has announced plans for a major expansion across the company. The number of staffers will rise by as much as 100 over the next 12 to 18 months, according to a memo to staff from Atlantic president Bob Cohn. That's a 30 percent boost in talent.



REAL STORY BEHIND FB'S NEWSFEED CHANGES

By John F. Marino, COO & Mng. Dir., Marino



Last month, Facebook announced changes to its newsfeed. Live-streamed video content — especially via Facebook Live — is the big winner, and will be a huge part of Facebook's future.

In the hierarchy of content mediums, video — live or otherwise — is extremely strong on ROIs and conversions. But live streaming adds an additional element to the mix.

Mark Zuckerberg and the other Facebook executives haven't been shy in touting their massive investment in its branded live video channels — predominantly Live and Create — and most observers agree that the social media giant and its competitors see live video as the next great battlefield.

Here's why:

Advertisers love video because it's where attention is focused. Half a billion people — an eighth of the world's population — watch video on Facebook each day and that number is growing. Millennials continue to comprise the demographic watching the most. Social videos generate 1,200 percent more shares than text and images combined. By next year, video will account for 80 percent of consumer Internet traffic worldwide. This results in platforms like Facebook retaining the ability to command premium advertising dollars.

Brands love video, thanks to its high conversion rates and increasing importance in buyers' journeys. Videos on landing pages can improve conversion by more than 80 percent. Almost two-thirds of consumers make a purchase after watching a branded video on a social platform. Logic dictates that more video content is allotted for in marketing budgets which, in turn, will mean increased advertising revenues.

Facebook's own research concluded that videos created and streamed via Facebook Live spark ten times as much engagement as video produced elsewhere. With those kinds of numbers, Facebook Live streams are going to be prominently displayed on the site, both in and out of consumer newsfeeds.

Live video is already an integral and growing force on the playing field of the future: mobile. Americans watch more than half their video content on mobile devices and they watch live video longer than VOD. Also, increased engagement time equals increased conversion and mobile live-streamed video will be essential in realizing the potential of geo-marketing and personalized "micro-moments."

There's a romantic element to live video, a chance to see history made in real-time. The hypothetical experience of watching astronauts land on Mars one day would lose some of its luster for someone watching a recorded video, as compared to experiencing it in the moment along with hundreds of millions of others via Facebook Live. When SpaceX launched its Falcon Heavy, users' Facebook and Instagram feeds were filled up by

live streams of the momentous event.

There's too much future revenue at stake for Facebook not to go all-in on live video. Facebook has reputational skin in the game, and — in the end — live video uniquely fosters engagement and community in a manner consistent with the social media giant's stated mission. So get ready for plenty of live streaming in your newsfeed.

For agencies and our clients, good, constructive consultation is in order. The production of the highest quality live video isn't cheap, nor is it cookie-cutter. But the tools to make it happen and have it streamed flawlessly are easily accessible.

We urge our own clients to avoid plans for live streams conceived with only Facebook in mind. Rather, we find it wise to move forward with creative ideas that can be purposed along several pathways of a well-diversified, cross-platform communications strategy.

HOTWIRE HATCHES VIDEO PROD. PARTNERSHIP

US and UK-based tech PR specialist **Hotwire** has launched a new branded partnership with global production company Irresistible Films.

The partnership, titled Hotwire Reels, will provide global, multi-lingual video services to the agency's network of 35 offices, partners and affiliates around the world, offering clients fast access to top video production talent for everything from fast turn-around social content, to advertising and full film production, to the ability to produce content from short films, advertisements and documentaries.

The Hotwire Reels venture now becomes an integral part of Hotwire's Digital Brand Lab, which will build upon the tech agency's existing video capabilities by offering clients greater scale and speed in the production and delivery of video content.

Irresistible Films works with creative teams around the world to deliver high-quality video content. Clients have included Dove, Hellman's, Kellogg's, Perrier and Visit Britain, among others. The London-based company, which maintains an additional office in New York, was founded in 2007.

Hotwire had previously worked with Irresistible on an informal basis for the past three years, developing video content for award-winning client campaigns such as "Be A Superhero With Supercard" and "Luxury For Less for Travelex."

Hotwire, which was founded in 2000, is a subsidiary of Australia-based marketing and communications network Eno Group Limited. It is one of the **top-ranked technology PR firms**, according to O'Dwyer's ranking.

