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OAKLAND WANTS PR FOR PORT UPGRADES

The Alameda County Transportation Commission is collecting proposals to provide PR services for its \$360M 7th Street Grade Separation East Project.



The work involves reconfiguring and rebuilding roads leading to the main gateway to the Port of Oakland, which is the nation's sixth busiest container port.

It includes a revamp of the more than 90-year old underpass that serves about 40 percent of the trucks headed for the Port, and the Union Pacific

freight trains that pass overhead to 7th St.

There are also plans for upgrading the current bike/pedestrian pathway and the plant-filled "greenway."

ACTC's PR partner will create content, handle media relations, support events, do community outreach and manage online activity. It will monitor and document media mentions and related subject matter issues, according to the RFP.

ACTC plans to offer a three-year contract with work kicking off in June.

Proposals are due Jan. 12 at [ACTC's electronic portal](#).
[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

PELTON NAMES WEINBERG CMO

Peloton brings on Lauren Weinberg as CMO. Weinberg succeeds Leslie Berland, who left the company last month for the CMO spot at Verizon.

Weinberg was previously at Intuit, where she served as SVP, chief marketing and revenue officer for QuickBooks.



Lauren Weinberg

Before that, she was CMO for Square, which provides technology and software solutions for global small business owners. She has also held marketing roles at Yahoo, MTV and AOL.

Based in New York City, Weinberg will oversee brand and product marketing, growth marketing, creative, consumer insights, membership, and global communications.

"Lauren's growth-first mindset, coupled with her proven ability to deliver growth at scale will be critical assets for our revitalized brand," said Peloton CEO Barry McCarthy.

TENEO REPS NIPPON STEEL TAKEOVER OF USS

Teneo is handling Nippon Steel Corp. as it acquires United States Steel Corp. for \$14.9B as part of its strategy to add steel-making capacity in "districts and areas where demand is promisingly expected to grow."

The transaction follows NSC's acquisitions in India and Thailand as it seeks to achieve its goal of producing 100M tons of steel per year. With USS, NSC's capacity hits the 86M mark.

NSC president Eiji Hashimoto said his company "has long admired USS with deep respect for its advanced technologies, rich history and talented workforce." His company is committed to honoring all agreements with USS' existing union contracts.

NSC's \$55 per share offer represents a 40 percent premium over USS' Dec. 15 closing stock price. The transaction is expected to close in the second or third quarter of 2024.

Robert Mead, Teneo Americas chairman, heads the NSC team that includes senior managing directors Monika Driscoll and Tucker Elcock.

[Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher's](#) Kelly Sullivan and Ed Trissel represent USS.



NIPPON STEEL

PR FIRMS TRY TO REGAIN FINANCIAL FOOTING

PR firms came off their "post-pandemic high" in 2023 as they were forced to cut staffs in the wake of a business slowdown, especially in the technology and financial sectors.

Edelman, Weber Shandwick, Ketchum, Zeno Group and BCW were among the big firms to lay off people in 2023.

Looking ahead to 2024, PR firms will wrestle with the "anti-woke" pushback against ESG programming, and seek to harness the power of AI to bolster productivity.

They will operate in a media environment that will be fixated on the presidential campaign and potential return to power of Donald Trump.

Here are some of the PR highlights of 2023.

Publicis Groupe sells Qorvis Communications to a management team led by long-time executive Matt Lauer. The French firm acquired DC-based Qorvis in 2014 when it was the tenth largest PR firm in O'Dwyer's rankings.



Continued on page 5

READERS DON'T TRUST AI-GENERATED NEWS

Sports Illustrated came under fire recently for surreptitiously publishing [a series of AI-generated articles](#) credited to authors that don't exist. The ensuing public furor over the incident suggests a looming challenge for publishers that have adopted or are currently experimenting with artificial intelligence, at a time when trust in the news is already at an all-time low.



Most American news consumers perceive articles written by AI as less trustworthy and want publishers to disclose when they've used AI in news stories, [according to a study](#) conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota's Hubbard School of Journalism & Mass Communication and the University of Oxford's Oxford Internet Institute.

The largest share of respondents polled (40 percent) said they believe AI technologies do a "worse job than humans" when it comes to producing news content, compared to a third (33 percent) who said they do "about the same job."

Only about one in ten (11 percent) said they think AI does "a better job than humans" in a newsroom, while an additional 16 percent admitted that they "don't know."

In addition, 81 percent said they believe news organizations should "alert readers or viewers" anytime AI is used in the creation of news content, and 78 percent of those who advocated for this disclosure also believe news organizations "should provide an explanatory note describing how AI was used."

AI-produced content fared better with audiences when those articles provided a list of sources. Researchers discovered that the "negative effects associated with perceived trustworthiness are largely counteracted" when AI-written articles shown to respondents cited sources alongside the articles.

The study, titled "'Or they could just not use it?': The Paradox of AI Disclosure for Audience Trust in News," surveyed nearly 1,500 U.S.-based participants and was conducted in September. The study is currently a "preprint" that hasn't yet been peer-reviewed.

LLYC FOUNDER LLORENTE DIES AT 63

José Antonio Llorente, founding partner and executive chairman of Spain's LLYC, died from cancer on Jan. 1. He was 63. Prior to launching LLYC, Llorente served as CEO of Burson-Marsteller's Spain office. He began his career at Agencia Efe and in the PR department of CEOE.



José Antonio Llorente

The US is LLYC's third biggest market, behind Spain and Mexico. The shop has offices in Miami, Washington, New York and San Diego.

"All of us who have had the immense fortune to know him, work with him, and learn with him will always be grateful for his generosity, audacity, and brilliance, but above all, for his kindness," Alejandro Romero, LLYC CEO, said in a statement. "A teacher, a mentor, and a great friend have left us. We are committed to making his immense legacy even greater."

The US is LLYC's third biggest market, behind Spain and Mexico.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

[Eleven Six](#), which works with clients in the hospitality and lifestyle communications sectors, signs on with **The Algonquin Hotel, Autograph Collection**, in New York City; **Vakkaru Maldives** in the Indian Ocean; and **Rock Springs Retreat Center** in Tennessee. The agency will handle public relations, influencer marketing, social media and partnerships for the The Algonquin Hotel, Autograph Collection, the second Autograph Collection property on its roster. For Vakkaru Maldives, a resort located a secluded reef island, Eleven Six's scope of work includes promoting their new residences and luxury experiences, as well as handling partnership collaborations. Rock Springs Retreat Center, which offers retreats with a focus on holistic wellness, has engaged Eleven Six to promote Rock Springs' its range of retreats, focusing on earned media relations.



FNK IR is hired to represent **ECD Automotive Design** as the retrofitter of British luxury classic autos goes public via a business combination with EF Hutton Acquisition Corporation I that is valued in the \$330M range. The custom-car builder has delivered over 500 customized vehicles since it was formed in 2013. FNK IR has Rob Fink, Matt Chesler, Robert Meyer, Jeffrey Stanlis and Stephen Lee on the account.

[Firecracker PR](#) has been engaged by **Ecobat**, a global leader in battery recycling, as the company's agency of record. The agency's scope of work will include strategic communications, media relations and social media for both Ecobat in the US and their European operations. Ecobat runs 11 smelting facilities, three lithium-focused facilities, a collection truck fleet, and 65,000 battery collection points, offering seamless service for battery collection and recycling.

[Montieth & Company](#) is selected by European biomethane solutions provider Landwärme as agency of record for its US market media relations and stakeholder engagement program. The company, which is headquartered in Germany, is looking to raise visibility for its strong track record in biogas upgrading and biomethane trading. M&Co will leverage its expertise in strategic communications and media relations to highlight Landwärme's scalable carbon capture, storage and usage solutions which it says are playing an increasingly important role in combatting climate change.



[Trevelino/Keller](#) is engaged by women-owned, Florida-based clean skincare brand **Asthetik Skincare**. The agency will support Asthetik Skincare with a comprehensive growth marketing and PR approach that includes a refreshed website and e-commerce platform, media relations, influencer and affiliate marketing, and lead generation. The company's products are made with plant-based ingredients and never tested on animals.

Hill & Knowlton signs on with **Be the Business**, an independent charity which works to inspire greater productivity through business change. The agency will provide media relations expertise and stakeholder engagement as well as building the brand's corporate reputation and trust among key audiences. The work will be led by Verity Dephoff, managing director, corporate affairs & advisory at Hill & Knowlton London.

HOW NOT TO SPEAK IN PUBLIC

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is, forgive me, a wimp.

A bureaucrat's bureaucrat, Mayorkas is the epitome of the gutless political appointee: prissy, proper, halting-in-speech and oh-so-cautious when it comes to answering questions about his job or policies. No wonder Secretary Mayorkas has become the bane of Congressional Republicans, the poster boy for President Biden's disastrous border immigration policies, which will form the basis of—groan—Donald Trump's 2024 campaign to retake the American presidency.



Fraser Seitel

So, there wasn't anything unusual when, at the end of October, Mayorkas slid into the torture seat before the U.S. Senate to endure a predictable tongue-lashing from his arch-enemy Josh Hawley, the unctuous Senator from Missouri. On this morning, Hawley was particularly enraged by a DHS employee who surreptitiously posted anti-Israel messages on social media. After Mayorkas flailed out to object, Hawley thundered, "Don't come to this hearing room when Israel has been invaded ... with Jewish students threatened for their lives ... and you have employees celebrating genocide ... and you're saying it's despicable for me to ask the question."

With Mayorkas bristling, the aggrieved Senator, on cue, yielded back to the chair. Just like always. But suddenly, something came over the terminally timid Mayorkas that made this particular scene gruelingly different.

"Mr. Chairman," said Mayorkas, "Senator Hawley takes an adversarial approach toward me. Perhaps he doesn't know my own background. I am the child of a Holocaust survivor. My mother lost all her family at the hands of the Nazis. So, I find his tone to be entirely misplaced and disrespectful of me and my heritage."

With the stunned Hawley sputtering in the background, the hearing moved on. Mayorkas had, by getting unusually personal, for once won the day.

This brings us full circle to December's pathetic Congressional crucifixion of the three embarrassing college presidents.

See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil

The December House of Representatives appearance to discuss the outbreak of anti-Semitism on college campuses by the presidents of Harvard, MIT and the University of Pennsylvania has become a cautionary public relations tale.

Their mealy-mouthed testimonies were tributes to equivocation, evasion, changing the subject and bothsidesism. Each so misread the gravity of the situation that Penn President Liz Magill lost her job, Harvard President Claudine Gay lost her credibility and MIT President Sally Kornbluth lost her reputation as a world-class scientific intellect.

President Kornbluth, never should have been at the hearing in the first place. While UPenn and Harvard were hotbeds of anti-Semitic activity, MIT's flare-ups were more muted. While Magill and Gay were newcomers to their universities, Kornbluth had been a respected scientist at MIT for nearly three decades. A month before the Congressional appearance, Kornbluth launched a Standing Together Against Hate initiative at MIT. But while the President of Columbia University

successfully ducked the Congressional invitation, the MIT President naively accepted. Big mistake.

In a crisis, counsel candor not 'context'

Ironically, Harvard and UPenn used the same Washington white-shoe law firm, WilmerHale, to advise their presidents on testifying before Congress. President Kornbluth, who, like Secretary Mayorkas is Jewish and has Holocaust survivors as part of her family, also reportedly met with the same law firm.

The reason lawyers like WilmerHale get the first call in critical Congressional testimony is because most university presidents or CEOs don't want to go to jail. Makes sense. So, the counsel that the WilmerHales of the world generally recommend is to stay vague, non-specific and contextual.

Public relations counselors, on the other hand, are more concerned with safeguarding one's reputation than deceptively dodging bullets to avoid the slammer.

Accordingly, the key moment in the House hearing came when bulldog Republican Elise Stefanik asked the three presidents whether calling for the genocide of Jews would violate their school's code of conduct. When pushed to answer yes or no, soon-to-be former President Magill responded, "It is a context-dependent decision." President Gay agreed, "It can be depending on the context." To which Rep. Stefanik now famously responded, "It does not depend on the 'context.' The answer is 'yes,' and that's why you should resign."

Harvard's President. Gay, unlike Ms. Magill, hasn't resigned yet. Nor is she likely to any time soon. But maybe next time she's faced with a crisis aimed squarely at ruining her reputation, she'll think twice about hiring lawyers to do the work more suited to the expertise of experienced public relations counselors.

Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 40 years. He is author of the Pearson text "The Practice of Public Relations," now in its 14th edition, and co-author of "Rethinking Reputation" and "Idea Wise." He may be reached directly at yusake@aol.com.

COLLINGWOOD CALLS FOR TOURISM PLAN

Collingwood, a city of 25K located on Ontario's Georgian Bay, is seeking a partner to develop a comprehensive and sustainable 3-5 year tourism strategy and action plan.

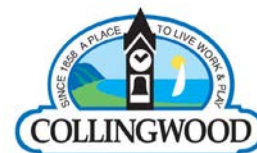
The plan will be used to make informed decisions regarding Collingwood's future investment in tourism and identify roles and responsibilities of the municipality and its partners for local tourism delivery.

Collingwood is considering implementing an accommodation tax and wants outside counsel for deciding how best to allocate the funds that it generates.

The desired action plan will ensure that Collingwood "is properly positioned to improve both tourists' and residents' experiences as well as leverage partnerships to ensure synergistic programming and reduction of duplication," according to the RFP.

The plan will address items such as responsible marketing, strategic product development, supporting events, enhancing tourism related infrastructure, addressing workforce challenges, including housing and attracting mid-week and shoulder season/offseason visitation.

Responses are due Jan. 11 at the [Bidding portal](#).
[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).



TWIN CITIES SEEKS PR TO STOP TRANSIT CRIME

The Metropolitan Council is looking for community relations support to improve the quality of life for riders on bus and rail systems in the Minneapolis/St Paul region of more than 3M people.



Working with the Metro Transit Police Dept., the communications partner will educate the riders about the transit system code of conduct and laws in order to reduce the number of calls for police assistance.

The focus will be on “hot spots” to prevent transit customers riders from committing crimes, and to build trust with the members of law enforcement.

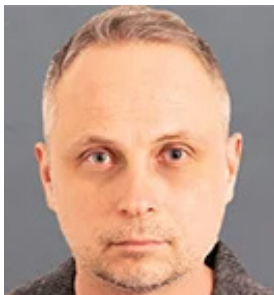
The selected firm will partner with organizations that provide resources, procedural justice, and de-escalation techniques to the transit community.

The Metro Council plans to issue a three-year contract. Responses are due Jan. 10. Firms must register on the Quest-CDN electronic portal.

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

ANTENNA GROUP HIRES EDELMAN VET NEWTON

[Antenna Group](#) appoints Paul Newton as its first EVP of integration & innovation.



Paul Newton

Before joining Antenna Group, Newton spent a decade at Edelman, where he designed, built, and oversaw Edelman’s global project management department. Under his leadership, the team scaled substantially and enabled multidisciplinary integration and complex multi-channel execution for some of Edelman’s largest and most complex clients.

“Driving true service integration and creating frictionless, high-value experiences for our client partners

is essential to Antenna’s continued growth – and there is no one better than Paul Newton to lead that charge,” said Antenna Group CEO Keith Zakheim.

PRIORITY PR DIRECTS LIONSGATE’S SPAC DEAL

Priority PR represents Screaming Eagle Acquisition Corp. as it plans a merger with the movie and TV studio business of Lionsgate Entertainment Inc.

The Lionsgate Studios Corp. SPAC will have an enterprise value of \$4.6B, and boast of franchises such as The Hunger Games, John Wick, The Twilight Saga and Ghosts.



Screaming Eagle CEO Eli Baker noted that Lionsgate Studios will be one of the only pure play content companies in the public markets and “well-positioned to unlock value for both existing and new shareholders.”

Lionsgate will retain ownership of the STARZ pay TV, streaming platform.

Priority PR founder/CEO Jeff Pryor represents Screaming Eagle. Before launching his Agoura Hills, CA shop, Pryor was EVP-corporate communications at MGM Studios, corporate spokesperson for Scandinavia’s SGS Broadcasting, and PR director of Lorimar Telepictures.

MALTBY SEEKS PR FOR AUTISM PROGRAMS

Ontario’s Maltby Centre, a non-profit dedicated to promoting child and young adult mental health, seeks a partner to design a marketing communications for its autism program.

The provincial Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, which has traditionally funded Maltby’s autism programming, is changing its funding model. It is shifting from bankrolling non-profits to putting money directly into the hands of clients/families.

To spearhead that push, Kingston-based Maltby wants a firm to help increase community awareness of its fee-for-service programming, expand reach by developing tailored messaging to targeted audiences, identify media opportunities, and bolster its organizational profile among professionals, families and the community at large.

The marketing effort must be culturally respectful, particularly of French language requirements, rural and indigenous communities, according to the RFP.

Responses are due Jan 8. They go to Kelsey Lemmon at klemmon@maltbycenter.ca.

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



MEDIA MANEUVERS

The New York Times sues Open AI and Microsoft, a major Open AI backer, for copyright infringement. In its complaint, which was filed Dec. 27, the Times claimed that the companies have used Times content, without its consent, to help create such AI products as OpenAI’s ChatGPT and Microsoft’s Copilot. “Defendants have effectively avoided spending the billions of dollars that The Times invested in creating that work by taking it without permission or compensation,” the Times said in the complaint. The paper is seeking damages, as well as asking that the tech companies be blocked from using its content and destroy any data sets that incorporate Times-generated material.

LinkedIn appears to be profiting from the exodus of advertisers turning away from Elon Musk’s X. The *Financial Times* reports that the platform’s ad revenues were up 10.1 percent year on year for 2023, reaching close to \$4B. According to research firm Insider Intelligence, growth of 14.1 percent is expected for 2024. The FT said that prices for LinkedIn were spiking due to a surge of interest from advertisers—rising by up to 30 percent. The report also noted that more big brands are leaving Musk’s increasingly divisive platform. “A few weeks ago most of our clients were off X. Now they are all off X,” one ad agency executive told the FT.

Salem Media Group sells Regnery Publishing, which has released books from authors including Ronald Reagan, Donald Trump, Rand Paul, Tulsi Gabbard and Mitt Romney, to Skyhorse Publishing. The company expects to close the transaction by the end of the year. Regnery will keep its name and operate as an imprint of Skyhorse. One of the largest independent book publishers in the US, Skyhorse has had fifty-seven New York Times bestsellers and currently has over 10,000 titles in print. “We see a lot of synergies and opportunities for growth,” said Skyhorse Publishing president and publisher Tony Lyons.



PR'S 2023 SLOWDOWN

Continued from page 1

BCW CEO Donna Imperato announces resignation after a 25-year run at the WPP unit.



Donna Imperato

Teneo shells out \$80M for Tulchan Communications, financial/IR shop with more than 80 staffers in London and Singapore.

Hope Hicks, who was Donald Trump's PR guru, counsels Madison Square Garden after criticism that the "world's most famous arena" uses facial recognition technology to ban legal foes from attending events.

Kate Bedingfield, White House communications director, exits her post, which is filled by Ben LeBolt, partner at Bully Pulpit Interactive.

Kekst CNC provides crisis counsel to Adani Group, the India-based conglomerate accused of fraud and stock market manipulation by Hindenburg Research. Adani denies any wrongdoing.



Brunswick Group takes Concordia, the storied investment bank of the Rothschild family, private.

The New York City Dept. of Public Health gathers proposals for a strategic communications campaign to advance its agenda and respond to the elevated

interest in public health.

Public Policy Holding Company spends \$22M for Alexandria-based Multistate Associates, a local and state government relations shop with 77 professionals.



Tom Suozzi

Tom Suozzi, former Queens/Long Island Congressman, joins Actum as co-chair after launching an unsuccessful primary challenge to New York governor Kathy Hochul. He returns to the political arena by running for his old House seat that was occupied by the disgraced George Santos.

APCO Worldwide scoops up Gagen MacDonald, the 25-year-old Chicago-based organizational

communications engagement specialist. Maril MacDonald continues to run the firm as a subsidiary of APCO.

The Alaska Permanent Fund Corp, which was formed in 1980 to manage and invest the state's energy revenues, budgets \$600K for a PR search.

Growth slows at independent PR firms as O'Dwyer's releases rankings showing 18.2 percent growth in 2022, compared to a 29.7 percent advance in 2021.



Spain's LLYC doubles the size of its US staff to more than 65 professionals via the acquisition of an 80 percent stake in BAM, San Diego firm that focuses on the technology and venture capital segments, for \$13.2M.

California earmarks \$3.8M for a strategic communications campaign to warn residents

about the dangers of exposure to intense heat and wildfire smoke.

Dentons Global Advisors hires Tim Mulvey, who was communications director for the House Select Committee to Investigate the Jan. 6th Attack on the US Capitol.

KKR, private equity giant, buys 30 percent stake in FGS Global, a transaction that values the financial PR/crisis communications firm in the \$1.4B range.

Ogilvy Government Relations signs on to represent St. Louis-based Peabody Energy, which is America's No. 1 coal producer.

Tourism Ireland, which was established 25 years ago as part of the Good Friday Agreement, scouts for a global PR partner to promote travel to the entire island. A key priority is to develop the tourism potential of Northern Ireland.

Margot Edelman, a 12-year veteran of the No. 1 independent firm, is named general manager of the flagship New York office. She is the daughter of CEO Richard Edelman.

Subject Matter, DC-based advocacy shop, merges with Kivvit, No. 18 in O'Dwyer's 2022 rankings with \$39.5M in fee income. Coral Tree Partners, Los Angeles-based private equity firm, acquired Subject Matter in 2022.

ICR bolsters its technology and mobility PR segments with the acquisition of Lumina Communications, the San Jose-based firm with more than 40 staffers and 50+ clients.

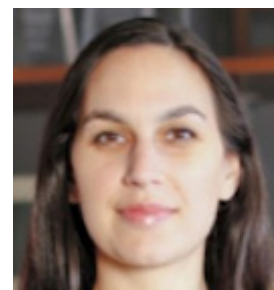
America's trust in news organizations improved somewhat, according to a report from market research firm YouGov. It's a rare bit of good news for the embattled media.

Ex-New York City Congressman Max Rose joins Oaktree Solutions as managing director for federal and international affairs. Frank Carone, who was chief of staff for NYC mayor Eric Adams founded Oaktree.

Leidar, a Geneva-based firm, expands in the US market by acquiring LEVICK, the Washington public affairs and crisis firm that was founded by the late Richard Levick.

BCW recruits Corey duBrowa, VP-global communications and PA at Google and its Alphabet parent as CEO. He takes over for Donna Imperato.

CNN bounces CEO Chris Licht after publication of a hard-hitting 15K-word article that



Margot Edelman



Max Rose



Corey deBrowa

Continued on page 6

PR'S 2023 SLOWDOWN

Continued from page 5

ran in The Atlantic chronicling the meltdown of the cable channel and its disastrous Donald Trump town hall meeting.

The Senate opens an investigation into the planned merger of Saudi Arabia's LIV Golf with the PGA Tour.



LIV GOLF

TikTok signs up former Walt Disney chief communications officer Zenia Mucha as chief brand and communications officer. She also was a top advisor to former New York governor George Pataki and senator Al D'Amato.

Edelman cuts 240 staffers, or four percent of its workforce, to cope with the cooling down of the PR sector. The firm had added 25 percent more staff from January 2021 to June 2022 to deal with its heady post-pandemic growth.

Tech slump wallops WPP as CEO Mark Read halves 2023 growth forecast to 1.5 percent. Technology, which accounts for 18 percent of WPP's revenues, slipped 4.9 percent during the first six months of 2023.

Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal sends a letter to Teneo CEO Paul Keary asking for information about the role that it played in Saudi Arabia's bankrolling of the LIV/PGA Tour deal.



BCW buffs image of Abu Dhabi's Environmental Agency, which wants to be known as the top environmental regulator in the Middle East.

Mark Thompson, former director-general of the BBC and CEO of the New York Times Co,

becomes chairman/CEO of embattled CNN.

Bill Daley, vice chairman for public affairs of Wells Fargo, announces plans to retire at the end of 2023. The former chief of staff to president Barack Obama was in charge of Wells Fargo's government relations, corporate communications, branding and community relations, as well as the bank's foundation.

Bari Rafferty, the former CEO of Ketchum and communications/brand lead at Wells Fargo, joins Morrow Sodali stakeholder engagement and ESG consulting firm as CEO of the Americas, a new position.



BLUE WHITE FUTURE

Trident DMG, the Washington-based strategic communications firm, signs on to support the Blue and White organization's pro-democracy push in Israel.

ICR acquires London's Consilium Strategic Communications, healthcare and investor relations firm, to gain its first on-the-ground

presence in Europe.

Rupert Murdoch, 92, decides to step down as chairman of Fox Corp. and News Corp. and take the chairman emeritus title at both companies. Son and Fox CEO Lachlan congratu-

lated dad on his "remarkable" 70-year career.

Switzerland's Team Farner adds London's Lansons to its line-up of 16 integrated shops throughout Europe. Lansons co-founders Tony Langham and Clare Parsons will remain in their posts.

Morrow Sodali picks up Powerscourt, which is based in London and Dublin. Powerscourt focuses on financial and capital market communications, corporate campaigning, ESG matters and political affairs.

PR slips at Omnicom as its FleishmanHillard, Ketchum, Porter Novelli, Mercury and Marina Maher Communications units post a decline in Q3 revenues.

Americans are following the news less closely than they used to, according to a study from the Pew Research Center. Pew describes about 20 percent of Americans are casual news consumers, following the news on a "only now and then" basis.

Ex-MWWPR and Catalyst executive Andrew Garson pled guilty to charges that he defrauded his former employers of millions of dollars and agreed to pay \$3.8M in restitution.

C Street Advisory Group handles the high-profile Chapter 11 filing of WeWork, which fell victim to the work-from-home trend and high office lease costs.

Hill + Knowlton hires Tara Singh, a former aide to former British prime minister David Cameron, as he returns to political life as the UK's foreign secretary. Singh heads H&K's UK public affairs offering.

Reevemark signs on again with Nelson Peltz's Trian Fund Management as it resumes efforts to shake up Walt Disney Company's board of directors at the 2024 annual meeting.

MWW Group settles its federal suit alleging that it violated the False Claims Act by taking a second loan of \$2M from the Paycheck Protection Program to which it was not entitled. Firm agrees to pay the US \$2.29M plus interest; the fee includes a \$229K outlay to a whistleblower who is unaffiliated with MWW and the federal government.

LLYC cut ties with Manuel Rocha, the 73-year-old former American diplomat who has been charged with spying for Cuba. He was working as a senior international business advisor for LLYC at the time of his Dec. 4 arrest.

Vivendi is considering splitting into three separate companies, a move that would result in making the Havas ad/PR business a publicly traded company.



Andrew Garson



Manuel Rocha