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UNION COUNTY, NJ SEEKS PR

The Union County Improvement Authority is looking for a PR firm to promote its mission to create, construct and operate facilities and services for the public benefit of the people living in the northern New Jersey county.



Elizabeth is the largest city in Union County, which features towns such as Westfield, Summit, Kenilworth, Cranford, Mountainside and Scotch Plains.

The RFP calls for a partner to develop an overall PR plan for the UCIA that will include writing releases, conducting media outreach, setting up press conferences, handling events and managing social media activity.

The desired firm will have a minimum five years of experience and a track record of working with government entities.

Responses are due Jan. 26. They go to: Bibi Taylor, Executive Director; Union County Improvement Authority; 10 Elizabethtown Plaza, 5th Floor; Elizabeth, NJ 07207

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

BROWN RUDNICK HANDLES FTX FALLOUT

Brown Rudnick is providing PR and communications services to the Government of The Bahamas in connection with the collapse of cryptocurrency exchange FTX Digital Markets.

Sam Bankman-Fried, founder of FTX, had been running the company from a ritzy gated community on New Providence Island near the Bahamian capital of Nassau.

The US charged the 30-year-old with fraud, money laundering, violations of campaign finance laws and of diverting billions in customer funds to a trading platform that he controlled. He was arrested and extradited to the US on Dec. 21.

Bankman-Fried still has many fans in the Bahamas who appreciate the millions that he donated to local charities, church and government entities, including the local police.

Brown Rudnick had been providing legal services to the Bahamas since March 2022 but was “reengaged” on Dec. 6 following the FTX meltdown. It may communicate with reporters and US government officials about the activities of members of the Bahamian government regarding FTX.



Brown Rudnick’s team includes Stephen Best, chair of the white collar defense, investigations and compliance group; Clara Krivoy, co-chair of the digital & commerce unit; and William Baldiga, partner in the bankruptcy & corporate restructuring practice.

GOOD RIDDANCE 2022

The invasion of Ukraine, rising interest rates, tumbling stock prices, US/China tensions, an endless flow of refugees at America’s southern border and a lingering pandemic combined to make 2022 a year to forget.

The year started off with hopes that COVID-19 would soon be under control and ended with growing fears of a “tripledeemic.”

As 2022 wound to a close, PR firms are planning for a possible recession in 2023.

Here are some of the PR highlights of 2022.

Andy Polansky, CEO of IPG DXTRA and executive chairman of Weber Shandwick, announces his plan to retire, wrapping up nearly 40 years in marketing communications.



Andy Polansky

“I wanted to leave while there is still a lot of gas in the tank,” Polansky, who recently turned 60, told *O’Dwyer’s*.

Jeff Zucker, CNN Worldwide president, resigns due to a “consensual relationship with a colleague,” That colleague was Allison Gollust, CMO for CNN.

Declan Kelly, Teneo co-founder/CEO who resigned in 2021 after he became inebriated at a Global Citizen event and engaged in inappropriate behavior, reemerges. He launched Consello, a Madison Avenue advisory focused on merchant banking, corporate development, and mergers and acquisitions.

BGR Government Affairs cut its relationship with Nord Stream 2 AG, the company behind construction of a pipeline between Germany and Russia, after President Biden sanctioned it on Feb. 23 following Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine.

Everett Eissenstat, who was senior VP for global public policy at General Motors, joins Edelman Global Advisory as North America chair and global trade lead. At GM, Eissenstat reported to CEO Mary Barra.



Everett Eissenstat

Ronn Torossian steps down as CEO of 5W Public Relations after various reports that he secretly owned a news site and used it to hammer competitive firms. “I have become a distraction and the team deserves the freedom to operate in a context free of noise—noise I personally

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PPG HITS NORTH KOREAN DISINFORMATION

Prime Policy Group has picked up a \$600K contract to educate the Biden Administration and Congress on the “substantial activities of the North Korean Government to subvert the South Korean Government through civic institutions” and about its spread of disinformation, according to its one-year contract with Jayu Press of Seoul.



Kim Jong-un

Jayu Press believes those North Korean activities are designed to spread division in South Korea and change attitudes about the regime led by Kim Jong-un.

Prime Policy Group is expected to develop “bipartisan champions in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate

who will take the lead in engaging Congress in exposing these North Korean activities.”

It is to recruit influencers, such as Christian Protestant denominations, to encourage Congress to become more engaged with Korean affairs, and to brief think tanks.

ABU DHABI ENERGY PR PRO JOINS FTI

Rachel Ryan, deputy head of corporate communications at Masdar, the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, is joining FTI Consulting in March.



Rachel Ryan

She will be a senior director in the strategic communications unit’s energy and natural resources practice.

At Masdar, Ryan managed global communications campaigns and public affairs to promote initiatives to position it as a global leader in renewable energy with projects in more than 40 countries.

Prior to Masdar, Ryan was senior consultant and director at Hill+

Knowlton Strategies and senior EMEA director at Qorvis Communications.

GASTHALTER, BRUNSWICK REP SOCCER DEAL

London’s Eagle Football Holdings, which is headed by American investor John Textor, has acquired a controlling stake in French soccer team Olympique Lyonnais to bolster its network of teams. The deal is valued in the \$950M range.



The Lyon team joins Eagle’s line-up that includes English Premier League’s Crystal Palace, Brazil’s Botafogo (Rio de Janeiro) and Belgium’s Molenbeck (Brussels)

As part of the transaction, an investment consortium of Ares Management, Iconic Sports and Elmwood Partners has agreed to invest in Eagle.

Textor said the takeover represents a “new beginning for Olympique Lyonnais, an historic club that truly deserves a global stage.”

Gasthalter & Co.’s Jonathan Gasthalter and Nathaniel Garnick represent Iconic Sports. Brunswick Group has Max McGahan and Simone Selzer in London, and Guillaume Maujean and Tristan Roquet-Montegon in Paris handling Ares.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Rubenstein Public Relations is named AOR for **Filco Carting**, the leading provider of waste collection services in the greater New York City area. RPR has been engaged to tell the story of how Filco Carting CEO Domenic Monopoli led the company’s 6X revenue growth in annual sales between 1999-2021 and promote the company being named among the Top 50 largest recycling and waste firms by Waste360, based on its 2021 revenue. “I can’t think of a firm better positioned to help us tell the story of where Filco Carting has been—and position us for where we’re going,” said Monopoli.



Reevemark signs on as agency of record for Diamond Sports Group, a Sinclair Broadcast Group subsidiary. Diamond owns the Bally Sports Regional Sports Networks, whose 19 owned-and-operated stations serve as the TV home to more than half of the MLB, NHL and NBA teams based in the US. It also has a joint venture in Marquee, home to the Chicago Cubs and a minority interest in the YES Network, which carries the New York Yankees and Brooklyn Nets. Reevemark’s Diamond Sports Group team consists of founding partners Paul Caminiti and Renée Soto, and vice president Luc Herbowy.

The C-360 Agency is selected to provide marketing services for the **Liberian Registry**, which is comprised of more than 5,400 vessels and represents 15 percent of the world’s ocean-going fleet. A team from Baltimore-based C-360 will work to support the registry’s internal marketing team, promoting the Liberian International Ship & Corporate Registry (which administers the Liberian Registry) by emphasizing its high standards and breadth of services, responsiveness and trustworthiness.

SourceCode Communications is named the North America communications agency of record for **Getty Images**. Getty will join SourceCode’s Insights and Engagement practice roster of clients. The agency is tasked with creating strategic campaigns that play to the strengths of Getty Images’ portfolio of products, as well as high-lighting ways that brands of all sizes can leverage imagery and video to connect with consumers and build quality relationships.



Wonder Integrated Group, a woman-owned integrated marketing-communications firm located in New York, is named marketing and media agency of record for **Catalyst Market**, a sustainable global marketplace. The agency will provide strategic input and oversee all marketing and media activities for the marketplace’s launch as well as collaborating on the creation of content and management of social media channels to support the marketplace as it rolls out in early 2023. Catalyst Market was initiated by Catalyst 2030, a network of social entrepreneurs and changemakers founded to help meet the goals of the United Sustainable Development Group by 2030.

The Brandman Agency lands **Carlisle Bay Antigua**. The agency’s scope of work for the client will include media and influencer relations as well as overall PR. A member of The Leading Hotels of the World, Carlisle Bay Antigua is situated on one of the most pristine bays on the island, surrounded by untouched rainforest. It is also known for its diverse choice of restaurants and bars, all of which utilize locally sourced produce and ingredients.

MUSK CAN KICK OUT WHOMEVER HE DESIRES

The line between genius and madman is razor-thin.

On one hand, you can possess the Henry Ford-like brilliance to create a successful, attractive, superior new automobile and follow it up with a spaceship that flies to Mars. On the other hand, you can be so maniacal that you tear down, willfully, all you've created.

Behold the perplexing paradox that is Elon Musk.

Yes, he invented Tesla, the sleekest, fastest and most gorgeous car of all time.



Fraser Seitel

Yes, he's single-handedly wrecking the value of his once-thriving company and its shareholders, one of whom—in dismaying full disclosure—is me!

No, he never really intended to buy Twitter.

No, he had/has no clue what to do with the losing social network now that he's stuck with it.

And there's little chance Twitter, the company, will avoid bankruptcy

and that Musk, the individual, will avoid being forced to sell out at bargain-basement prices the only liquid currency he owns, Tesla stock, to repay his bulging Twitter debt.

And there's also little doubt that the billionaire's purchase of Twitter will go down in the annals of business decisions as "Elon Musk's Folly," one of the dumbest takeovers of all time.

But—and here's the point—despite what outraged journalists and self-appointed free speech advocates have argued, the fact that Musk owns the private messaging site gives him every right to throw off that site any reporter he doesn't like.

Sorry, *New York Times* and *Washington Post* and CNN and Keith Olbermann and Stephen King and AOC, but if he owns the company, then as long as he isn't acting in a racist, sexist or antisemitic manner, he can toss your caboose off the site.

Musk's initial decision to suspend from Twitter any journalist—who, through tweet or link, exposed the location of the Musk family—was met with great vitriol by reporters and politicians around the world.

The Times demanded a "satisfying explanation for this action." The executive editor of the Post huffed the suspensions "undermine Elon Musk's claim that he intends to run Twitter as a platform dedicated to free speech."

But here's why Musk is right and his critics are wrong.

First, while Twitter users, like the rest of us, are protected by Constitutional First Amendment Free Speech and Free Press clauses, Twitter users aren't "journalists" in the classical sense, who are protected by media shield laws.

Rather, Twitter is now a private company, owned by one man, who can do with it what he wants, as long as it's legal.

If media companies, free speech champions or human rights advocates don't like what Musk is doing with Twitter, they can either take him to court or petition Congress to pass laws that treat blogs and social media as "journalists."

Moreover, to most people, Twitter is meaningless. The vast majority of Americans—77 percent, according to the latest Pew Research data—don't use Twitter. And of the less than one-quarter who do use the site regularly, the top 25 percent of those users produce 97 percent of all tweets.

And who are the top Twitter daily users? Journalists, 69 percent of whom report they use Twitter more than any other

site. That compares with only 13 percent of U.S. adults who say they regularly get news from Twitter.

So, the point is that even though the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* and other major media regularly cite tweets as a major source of news and prevailing opinion, Twitter, in fact, is the very definition of an "elite" medium with little relevance to most people.

So, if Elon Musk wants to kick some reporter off his site, he's totally within his rights to do so.

Second, journalists aren't even "journalists" anymore. So why should they be accorded special privileges?

Objectivity and professional integrity once were the attributes separating journalists from the rest of us. Typical were the six elements of the Code of Ethics of the Radio Television Digital News Association: 1) public trust, 2) truthfulness, 3) fairness, 4) integrity, 5) independence and 6) accountability.

In other words, once upon a time, if you read it in the *New York Times*, you could be relatively certain the story had been produced by professional journalists, vetted by experienced editors and therefore produced with even-handedness and a minimum of political bias.

Today, where according to the paper's own demographic data, 91 percent of Times' readers identify as Democrats, the old rules of fairness and truthfulness no longer apply.

Typical is the Times' daily drumbeat of embarrassing "news" stories that fan the flames of an imaginary "national trend" that more and more firms are unionizing. To "prove" its case, the Times regularly reports on the unionization efforts at only two companies, Starbucks and Amazon. The reality in both cases, where most efforts to unionize have been thwarted by enlightened management adopting more pro-labor benefits, is rarely mentioned in Times' stories. No wonder, according to most polls, less than half of Americans believe the Times is a "trustworthy news source."

The reality in today's world of journalism is that objectivity is out and political bias is in. So, the argument that journalists merit special privileges is increasingly more difficult to justify, primarily because ...

Third, the media, sadly, are no longer considered "credible" sources of news by many Americans.

Credibility in the media—just like trust in most American institutions—continues to decline. According to the latest Pew Research:

Trust in national news outlets among all U.S. adults has descended to 61 percent, with 77 percent of Democrats and only 42 percent of Republicans expressing such trust.

Younger Americans under 30 now trust social media news sources as much as national media news sources.

Perhaps, most tellingly, while 76 percent of all American adults believe the news media have a responsibility to strive for "equal coverage" of all sides in reporting news, only 44 percent of U.S. journalists feel similarly.

So much for journalistic credibility.

In all fairness, when it comes to credibility, at this stage Elon Musk also commands little or none. But does the mad billionaire have the right to expel anyone he wants from his sinking social media site? Yes, he does.

Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 40 years. He's the 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.

PR WANTED FOR UKRAINE'S HOLODOMOR

The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies seeks a firm to create a global awareness campaign for the Holodomor, the terror-famine waged in 1932-1933 by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin to crush the Ukrainian independence movement.



Stalin implemented harsh quotas on Ukrainian grain producing areas to feed people living in cities elsewhere throughout the Soviet Union. It was part of his rapid industrialization drive. The United Nations in 2003 estimated 7 to 10 million Ukrainians starved to death due to Stalin's policies.

The CIUS is part of Canada's University of Alberta

It is seeking bids from firms "with sufficient capacity and demonstrated experience on successfully developing global campaigns focusing on social justice in order to design a powerful and effective Holodomor Awareness Campaign," according to the RFP.

Deadline for responses is Jan. 13 at the University of Alberta's portal.

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

MONTENEGRO SEEKS SUPPORT IN DC

Bipartizan Solutions is providing strategic communications counsel to Montenegro to further its bid to bolster relations with the US.

CEO Mitchell Barak, the American-Israeli pollster and PA pro, will advocate on behalf of Montenegro before the White House, Congress, State Dept and the media. He will position Montenegro, which is a member of NATO, as the US bridge to the rest of the Balkans.



Bipartizan's one-year contract went into effect Dec. 1 and is worth \$35K a month.

Barak reports to Montenegro's prime minister Dritan Abazovic and his senior advisor and ex-foreign minister Dorde Radulovic.

Barak served as a speechwriter for Israel president Shimon Peres and prime minister Ariel Sharon, and as an aide to then deputy minister Benjamin Netanyahu during the tenure of prime minister Yitzhak Shamir.

NAVARRO-MCKAY TO EXIT BERLINROSEN

Alex Navarro-McKay, leader of [BerlinRosen](#)'s campaigns & elections practice, is departing the shop after a 14-year run.



The Democratic shop handled more than 170 races in 28 states during 2022, winning 100-plus of them.

It helped elect five new Democrats to Congress: Dan Goldman and Pat Ryan (NY), Greg Casar (TX), Summer Lee (PA) and Maxwell Frost (FL). The firm also helped Ruwa Romman become the first Muslim woman to serve in the Georgia State house.

Alex Navarro-McKay BR also says it protected abortion access and promoted gun safety reform.

Navarro-McKay, who joined BR from the John Edwards for President campaign, plans to consult and teach at Columbia's University School of International and Public Affairs.

Isaac Goldberg, a six-year veteran of BR, will take over for Navarro-McKay.

ON THE MOVE

MF Media Group brings on **Audrey Granger** as president of marketing communications, effective immediately. Granger comes to AMF from Highwire PR, where she served as vice president, overseeing public relations for major tech brands, developing creative media relations plans, and leading teams through strategic thinking and professional growth and development. She was previously principal, marketing and public relations at 70kft and director, public relations at Whirlpool Corporation. At AMF, she will lead the agency's traditional lines of service with an eye toward greater collaboration between departments and accelerated growth.



Audrey Granger

Current Global names **Peter Jacob** managing director, Current Global Middle East. Jacob spent 15 years at Weber Shandwick as a member of the senior EMEA management team with responsibility for new business and growth across the region. He relocated to Dubai in 2016. "He is the right leader to drive Current Global in this region, and his appointment marks the official launch of Current Global Middle East," said Ziad Hasbani, CEO, The Weber Shandwick Collective and Jack Morton, MENAT.

Brunswick Group appoints **Anja Ingenrieth** as a partner in the firm's Berlin office, effective January 1. Ingenrieth most recently served as head of Deutsche Telekom AG's EU office as well as VP for European affairs in Brussels. She previously held senior corporate communications and public affairs roles at Bayer, and worked as a political journalist for almost 15 years. In her new position Ingenrieth will work to further strengthen Brunswick's public affairs and media relations capabilities in Europe.

McAfee appoints **Deirdre Findlay** as SVP and CMO. Findlay joins the company from Condé Nast, where she was global CMO and head of consumer revenue, leading consumer marketing efforts for brands including *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker*. She previously served as global CMO at Stitch Fix and senior director of global hardware marketing at Google. In her new position, Findlay will oversee all worldwide marketing and communication efforts and report to Greg Johnson, president and CEO of McAfee. "Deirdre is a changemaker, brand innovator and an accomplished leader," said McAfee CEO Greg Johnson.



Deirdre Findlay

Abel Communications hires **Damian Rintelmann** as chief digital officer and creative director. Rintelmann most recently served as builder-in-residence for Olive Ventures. He previously held executive positions at Weber Shandwick, imre and WebbMason Marketing. In his new role, Rintelmann is leading the firm's creative and digital offerings and teams.

Tucker Powersports names **Lesley Madsen** VP of marketing. Madsen was most recently director of marketing for Dallas Cowboys Marketing. She has also worked for Radio Shack and Dave & Buster's. At Tucker, Madsen will work to develop marketing programs for the company's owned brands, as well as for the products it distributes.

GOOD RIDDANCE 2022

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created,” he wrote in an internal memo acquired by *O’Dwyer’s*. Torossian will serve as chairman of the New York-based firm that he founded in 2002.

WPP pulls out of Russia due to Vladimir Putin’s decision to invade Ukraine. The ad/PR holding company, which has nearly 1,400 people in Russia, thanked them for their service to clients. It promised to work closely with clients during the winddown of operations.



Vladimir Putin

Americans largely believe the tech industry has had a positive impact on their lives, but they also distrust social media companies, according to a poll from insights and analytics company Ipsos. The report found that nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of U.S. adults believe the tech industry positively affects their lives.

US prosecutors have charged Elena Branson, who chaired the New York-based Russian Community Council of the USA, with acting and conspiring to be an agent of the Russian government and willfully failing to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. She also is charged with conspiring to commit visa fraud and making false statements to the FBI. The 61-year-old Branson is a dual US/Russian citizen.

Trust plays a major role in consumer decisions about vaccine compliance and preventive care, according to a study from Edelman. The study also found that the level of confidence in the healthcare system took a hit in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Edelman’s “Trust Barometer Special Report on Health” found that more than half (52 percent) of respondents said that the pandemic had lowered their confidence level in healthcare.

Congressman Don Beyer introduces a bill to support online literacy and educate Americans on how to spot disinformation and misinformation. The Educating Against Misinformation and Disinformation Act is inspired by a program in Finland that teaches students from K-12 to identify propaganda from neighboring Russia.

The World Trade Center Health Program, which was established after the 9/11 terror attacks, issues an RFP for outreach and education services aimed at underrepresented populations of survivors and responders who may not be aware of the benefits they are entitled to. An estimated 400K people in NYC were impacted by the dust cloud caused by the collapse of the WTC.



The number of journalists who see CEOs and company PR professionals as credible sources has dropped in the past year, according to a survey from Muck Rack. While 84 percent of respondents said CEOs were credible sources for their reporting in 2021, that number slid to 66 percent in 2022. Company PR pros also saw a decline from 55 percent to 50 percent in the latest survey.

ExxonMobil hires Matt Furman as VP-public and government affairs. He replaces Suzanne McCarron, who is retiring after a 24-year run. Furman joins the energy giant from BestBuy, where he had been chief communications and public affairs officer since 2012

Ruder Finn acquires Peppercomm, a firm that reported \$9.2M in 2021 fee income for the 58th slot on *O’Dwyer’s*

rankings of PR firms. Peppercomm’s 29 employees in New York, San Francisco and London handle accounts such as Dole Sunshine Co., MINI Cooper, Xero and trivago. The firm, which is led by Steve Cody, is noted for its “Change Agent” humor-led training programs.



Kathy Bloomgarden, Steve Cody

BCW names Mary

Corcoran president, North America, effective May 1. She joins BCW from Real Chemistry, where she ran the Twist operating company and served as RC’s chief client officer.

Kristina Schake, who was Joe Biden’s COVID-19 PR chief, joins Walt Disney Co. as executive VP-global communications after wrapping up a 10-month stint as the Biden administration’s COVID-19 public education campaign director. She took that post after serving as communications specialist for Barack and Michelle Obama’s Higher Ground Productions.

WPP’s BCW, H+K Strategies, VMLY&R, Group W and Kinetic donate creative and advertising space for New York mayor Eric Adams’ move to run digital billboards in Florida to denounce the “Don’t Say Gay” law.

Publicis Groupe’s Arthur Sadoun says Q1 revenues jumped 17.1 percent to \$3B, driven by a robust demand for its Publicis Sapient and Epsilon digital offerings. Organic growth rose 10.5 percent compared to a 2.8 percent year-ago increase.

Seth Faison, who did a five-year stint as managing director of Sitrick And Company’s New York office, joins Brunswick Group as partner in its freshly minted China hub. Prior to working at Mike Sitrick’s Los Angeles-based crisis shop, Faison headed the *New York Times*’s Shanghai bureau and served as Beijing correspondent for the *South China Morning Post*.

Omnicom CEO John Wren reported a 0.5 percent dip in Q1 2022 revenues to \$3.4B and a 24.2 percent decline in operating profit to \$353M. He cited the negative impact of foreign currency translations and drop in acquisition revenue, net of disposition revenues for the lackluster performance.

Finn Partners inks \$1.3M six-month contract with the Ministry of Presidential Affairs for the United Arab Emirates to develop a communications strategy designed to bolster the image of the Gulf State.

WPP reports 8.1 percent Q1 growth to \$3.2B in like-for-like revenues due to strong demand for its digital media, e-commerce, data and marketing technology offerings. CEO Mark Read boosted overall 2022 guidance from five percent to 5.5 percent to the 6.5 percent level due to the strong start of the year and continued momentum.

Russell Dubner, who exited as Edelman vice chairman in December 2021 after a 28-year run at the firm, joins the Boston Consulting Group as senior partner/global communications.

Ruder Finn acquires Comunicad LLC, an Arlington, VA-based multicultural shop that has served clients such as Ford, Verizon, Telemundo, American Airlines, Freddie Mac, PepsiCo, AARP and Molson Coors.

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Karine Jean-Pierre succeeds Jen Psaki as White House press secretary on May 13 to become the first Black and openly gay person to hold that position.



New York Republican Congressman Tom Reed steps down from Congress and joins BCW's Prime Policy Group government relations shop as vice chairman. Reed announced his decision to quit seven months before the end of his term from the floor of the House.

Karine Jean-Pierre which includes Grayling, Citigate Dewe Rogerson, Red and Circle, rebrands as Accordience.

Embattled Wells Fargo has named Amy Bonitatibus CCO and brand officer. She reports to vice chairman Bill Daley and handles duties once held by former Ketchum CEO Barri Rafferty, who was hired in June 2020.

Edelman signs a one-year \$800K contract to provide PR services to Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Culture, which plans a crucial role in delivering on Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's "Vision 2030" transformation program.

Moderna awards its global corporate PR duties to DXTRA Health, a collective of more than 1,500 staffers housed within Interpublic shops. A cross-disciplined group from Weber Shandwick, Golin and Jack Health will work to bolster the corporate reputation of the COVID-19 vaccine maker and spotlight its research savvy. Moderna had used FTI Consulting and Ruder Finn for PR.

Longacre Square Partners handles communications for the reorganization of Revlon, which filed for Chapter 11 in US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York.

Brian Bartlett, who served in George W. Bush's White House and co-founded the Rational 360 shop, joins Kekst CNC to open its Washington office.

The Justice Dept. opens probe of Digital World Acquisition Corp., the blank check company that plans to take Donald Trump's social media platform public. The Securities and Exchange also is investigating DWAC.



Julie Hamp, who resigned her position as chief communications officer of Toyota in 2015 after being arrested in Japan on suspicion of drug charges, returns to the automaker.

Julie Hamp **Matt McKenna, who was spokesperson for president Bill Clinton**, signs on at The Levinson Group as a senior advisor.

Finn Partners adds SPAG, an 85-member healthcare shop that has offices throughout Asia.

Interpublic's Q2 net revenues grew 4.7 percent to \$2.4B as CEO Philippe Krakowsky reports gains across all regions, client sectors and operating units.

Ridgely Walsh, which was founded by the well-connected DC Republican PA consultant Juleanna Glover, provides PR and media work for Ukraine on a volunteer basis.

FTI Consulting's PR group registers 6.2 percent Q2 growth as its reputation, crisis, cyber and litigation segments post solid performances.

WPP chief Mark Read says its 8.7 percent 1H growth was driven in part by a resurgence in demand for strategic communications at its H+K Strategies, BCW and Ogilvy units.

BerlinRosen acquires a majority stake in Derris, a brand consultancy that has launched direct-to-consumer brands such as Warby Parker and Everlane. It has 65 staffers in New York and 10 in London.

The International Rescue Committee kicks off a search for a PR firm to publicize the plight of Ukrainian refugees.

McDonald's names Jon Banner EVP and global chief impact officer. He joins from PepsiCo, where he was EVP-communications, and president of the soft drink company's foundation.

WPP's GroupM Worldwide handles Ukraine's Ministry of Culture and Information Policy's "Advantage Ukraine" campaign to promote confidence among businesses, investors and policymakers that the battered country will recover from Russia's invasion.

Finn Partners acquires Rachel Kay Public Relations, a 19-person shop based in San Diego that focuses on the food and beverage category.

WPP scoops up Miami-based JefferyGroup, which has more than 330 staffers and an extensive network in Latin America.

The Securities and Exchange Commission files charges against Kim Kardashian for promoting a crypto asset security on her Instagram without disclosing that she was paid \$250K to do so.

The American Academy of Pediatrics begins a hunt for a PR firm to counter disinformation and misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Sean McCormick, who was VP-communications at Boeing, joins Chevron with the same title. Most recently, McCormick was at Trailrunner International.

Justin Goodman, communications director for Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, joins SKDK as an EVP in its Washington public affairs practice.

LGBTQ+ representation in communications is getting better, but many brands are still lagging when it comes to making a year-round commitment, according to a report from WPP Unite.

BPCM signs three-year deal to represent Volkswagen Group of America as the German automaker makes an aggressive push to market its line-up of electric vehicles. Edelman had the account.

The State Dept. appoints James Rubin coordinator of the Global Engagement Center, which is to lead Washington's effort to recognize, understand, expose and counter foreign state and non-state propaganda and disinformation that threatens US security.



Justin Goodman