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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
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UNCLE SAM UPS PR \$\$\$ FOR OBAMACARE

Weber Shandwick has picked up a \$33M task order from the Dept. of Health and Human Services as the federal government ramps up outreach for the Affordable Care Act.

The Interpublic unit, one of a handful of pre-selected firms that work for HHS, has been working through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to promote health insurance exchanges under ObamaCare over the past two years.



Obama speaks at an Affordable Care Act event at the White House on July 18.

A procurement document outlining the latest award to WS says the pact was signed July 12 and runs through May 31, 2014.

The Obama administration is ratcheting up its PR outreach as an Oct. 1 deadline for exchanges looms.

Young people and minorities are key to the federal outreach as their insurance payments would help offset the cost of older (and sicker) Americans.

The federal government will run exchanges covering 36 states. Fourteen states and D.C. will run their own exchanges.

DELL PR CHIEF QUILTS AMID TAKEOVER FIGHT

Kelly McGinnis, VP of global communications at Dell, is quitting as the PC maker's \$25B buyout plan engineered by Michael Dell faces heavy opposition from institutional investors.

Dell's management has rescheduled the July 17 shareholder vote on the deal to July 24. It gave the need for "additional time to solicit proxies from Dell shareholders" as the reason.

McGinnis will exit at the end of the month and join Levi Strauss on Aug. 5, taking over for Jill Nash.

She joined Dell in 2010 from Enfatico, which handled its PR and advertising.

Karen Quintos, Dell's marketing chief, credited McGinnis for improving the company's "reputation and credibility as an end-to-end solutions provider through strategic events, thought leadership campaigns and M&A activities, yielding substantial increases in positive share of voice."

Marc Bien, Dell comms. manager who worked on reputation issues, mergers & acquisitions and leveraged buyout comms., will assume McGinnis' duties.

IPG's NET TUMBLES 18.3%

Interpublic has reported an 18.3 percent decline in Q2 net to \$86.1M on a 2.4 percent uptick in revenues to the \$1.8B mark.

U.S. revenues advanced 4.8 percent to \$997M, while overseas activities slipped 0.7 percent to \$760M.

CEO Michael Roth said the primary focus during the second-half would be on "controlling costs and delivering a high level of revenue conversion."

IPG's constituency management group, which includes Weber Shandwick, GolinHarris, DeVries, Jack Morton and Octagon, reported a robust 9.6 percent rise in revenues to \$320M. That contrasted with the 0.9 percent growth of the ad agency group of McCann Worldgroup, Draftfcb and Lowe & Partners.

Andy Polansky, CEO of Weber Shandwick, said IPG's top PR unit did "particularly well" during the period, driven by strong performances in healthcare, reputation, social media and public affairs.

ECUADOR LAUNCHES POST-SNOWDEN PR

Ecuador, which was posed to lose trade breaks with the U.S. after it offered a temporary travel document to fugitive Edward Snowden, has hired Van Scoyoc Assocs. to patch things up in D.C.

The South American nation has agreed to pay VSA \$300K a-month through the end of the year under a contract that went into effect July 9.

The pact says VSA will provide the Washington Embassy counsel on where Ecuador has a "direct interest or need for advocacy and consulting assistance."

At first, Ecuador's president Rafael Correa said he was "not a least bit concerned" about losing trade breaks under the Andean Trade Promotion & Drug Eradication Act" that support 320K jobs in his nation.

Ecuador has since had second thoughts about its "stand tall" strategy. Bolivia, Venezuela and Nicaragua say they will accept Snowden, the ex-Booz Allen Hamilton specialist who remains in Moscow's airport.

Development Counsellors International in New York has a pre-Snowden pact with Ecuador's Ministry of Tourism.

PN COLLECTS FOR UNICEF

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF has selected Porter Novelli for development of a PR plan to bolster audience engagement and spark fundraising activity.

PN will work in tandem with ID, which is charged with boosting UNICEF's profile in the Hollywood community, dealing with the entertainment/consumer press and handling special events.

BUILD IT IN BUFFALO SEEKS PR

Launch New York, a non-profit venture development group, is seeking a PR firm to promote the Build It In Buffalo business plan competition.

Build It is an outcome of Governor Andrew Cuomo's pledge of \$1B in Empire State funds to attract private investment and spark growth in the Buffalo Niagara region.

The plan is to generate start-up opportunities by backing applied R&D, mentoring entrepreneurs, supporting early-stage firm growth and encouraging minorities to open businesses.

Build It's business plan competition features \$5M in prizes. It's hoped the cash will attract entrepreneurs from around the world to compete for prizes that will turn ideas into funded, high-growth enterprises in Buffalo Niagara," according to the RFP.

The job of the selected PR firm is to promote the competition to "distinguish it as the largest business competition in the world."

Proposals are due July 26. Information is at competition@launchny.org. RFP: <http://bit.ly/15ZHYkJ>.



STRATACOMM ENGINEERS NS PR

Norfolk Southern, the eastern U.S. railroad giant formed via merger in 1982, has coupled its PR account to Washington-based Stratacomm, following a competitive pitch.

NS, which uses the tagline "Thoroughbred of Transportation," runs 20,000 miles of routes in 22 states. It has five main PR staffers led by Frank Brown, assistant VP of corporate communications at NS.

Brown said the firm was hired to pitch the railroad as a "backbone of the American economy" as well as a "competitive advantage for the country."

The company has worked hard over the past few years to burnish environmental credibility, aiming to curb emissions from its diesel locomotives and to crack perceptions that railroads are heavy polluters.

John Fitzpatrick, managing partner at Stratacomm, an Omnicom unit under FleishmanHillard, said his firm will help the railroad communicate its heritage, economic and environmental role, and "vision of tomorrow."

NS posted 2012 revenue of \$11B and net income of \$1.7B. James Hixon, executive VP of law and corporate relations, oversees corporate communications, among other areas of the company.

NYPD PR CHIEF TO NOTRE DAME

Paul Browne, who heads PR for the New York City Police Department, is heading west to the University of Notre Dame next month in the newly created role of VP for public affairs and communications, following a search.

Matthew Storin, chief communications executive at ND, and Louis Nanni, VP for university relations, have covered the post through a consolidation of PR operations started in 2011.

OMC'S PR REVENUES CLIMB 4.3%

Revenue at Omnicom's PR units rose 4.3% in the second quarter to \$336.1M as overall revenue at the conglomerate ticked up 2.1% to \$3.6B for the period.

Net income rose 2.4% to \$289.5M, the company reported today.

Organically, revenue at OMC PR units including Porter Novelli, Ketchum and FleishmanHillard climbed 3.8%, compared with a 4.3% organic rise for advertising (\$1.8B) and relatively flat revenue at its customer relationship management division (\$1.3B).

For the first half of 2013, Omnicom PR revenues are up 4% (2.9%) organically on revenue of \$654.5M. OMC's acquisition expenses are \$59.4M for the first half, including \$13.2M for buying firms and stakes and \$46.2M for earn-outs on prior deals. Debt for the 12 months ended June 30 topped \$4B, up from \$3.9B in 2012. Debt excluding cash and investments was \$1.4B for the period, down from \$1.7B in 2012. Asked about the second half of 2013, CFO Randall Weisenburger said in a conference call July 18, "It's certainly encouraging to see how this quarter came out."

GAMBIA INKS \$45K MONTHLY PACT

BGR Government Affairs has inked Gambia to a \$45K monthly pact to win economic and political support from the U.S. and non-government organizations for its adolescent and adult female education programs.

Gambia has one of Africa's highest rates of female genital mutilation. A survey found that nearly 80 percent of women in Gambia have undergone the traditional custom.

The United Nations Population and UNICEF this month criticized Gambia's effort to end FGM, a practice that may lead to death, infertility, birth complications and mental illness.

Haley Barbour's firm may offer guidance and counsel to Gambia's government on other issues from time to time, according to its agreement.

The contract is with the Ministry of Information and Communications Infrastructure.

Gambia joins BGR's roster of foreign clients that includes Qatar, Kazakhstan, Kurdish Regional Government (Iraq), India and Thailand.

FIRMS TACKLE ALERE PROXY CONTEST

Medical diagnostics developer Alere has brought in PR reinforcements in a proxy showdown with hedge fund Coppersmith Capital.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher is working with Waltham, Mass.-based Alere in its campaign to convince shareholders that a Coppersmith slate of directors should be rebuffed at the company's annual meeting Aug. 7.

New York-based Coppersmith, working with Sard Verbinen & Co and owning about 7% of Alere, is dangling a proxy card of three director candidates to urge the company to divest some of its units to reap more than \$3B and boost its share price. It has also engaged proxy firm Mackenzie Partners.

Alere had 2012 revenue of \$2.8B.

PUBLICIS, AOL TO BECOME PALS

Bob Lord, CEO of Publicis Groupe's Razorfish digital shop, is joining AOL on Aug. 1 as part of an alliance between the two parties to forge a global live digital advertising network called PAL.

As CEO of AOL Networks, Lord will work closely with Publicis executives including Rishad Tobaccowala,

chair of Razorfish/DigitasLBI; Laura Desmond, CEO of Starcom MediaVest, and Tom Bernardin, chief of Leo Burnett Co.

PAL's services will include content creation for AOL's more than 220M users, measurement/analytics and development of "consumer connection tools."

Publicis CEO Maurice Levy said in a statement: Live advertising gives brands the immediate live connections that consumers expect in our digitally connected world, and AOL is the ideal partner for this partnership precisely because live advertising is such a core part of its strategy.

Tim Armstrong, CEO of AOL, called live advertising "the future of marketing on the Internet."

PAL, which is expected to launch Sept. 1, will offer Publicis clients exclusive live advertising partnerships for the first six months.

It will have an office in New York and Paris.

HUNTSMAN TO MSNBC

Abby Huntsman, a former Burson-Marsteller staffer and ABC News alum, has been named co-host of MSNBC's "The Cycle."

Huntsman, the daughter of politician Jon Huntsman, will be one of four hosts on the daily (Mon.-Fri.) MSNBC program. She takes the role held by S.E. Cupp, who is leaving for CNN.



Huntsman

Huntsman joined Burson in 2010 after serving as associate segment producer for "Good Morning America." She later moved to the Huffington Post's "HuffPost Live" as a host and producer and has been a pundit on CNN and MSNBC over the past two years.

OLBERMANN TO RETURN TO ESPN

Former Current TV and MSNBC host Keith Olbermann is returning to his sports news roots as an anchor on ESPN2.

Olbermann was an anchor for ESPN's "Sportscenter" from 1992-97. He will host a late-night (11 p.m. ET), Mon.-Fri. show on ESPN2 starting Aug. 26 called "Olbermann."

ESPN president John Skipper called Olbermann a "one-of-a-kind personality" who brings a "blend of editorial sophistication and unpredictability – you can never be sure what you'll get."

Olbermann, who clashed with bosses at Current and ESPN, said he wanted a chance to return to the network, adding, "I'm not going to waste it."

Olbermann will be a studio host for Major League Baseball's playoffs on TBS this fall.



Olbermann in his first run at ESPN in the mid-1990s.

SUN MEDIA SHUTTERS 11 PAPERS

Sun Media Corp., Canada's biggest publisher, is closing 11 newspapers and cutting 360 jobs in a cost-cutting move.

In announcing the shutdowns that are expected to save \$55M a year, Julie Tremblay, COO, noted that the print media business is undergoing an unprecedented transformation.

"The management decisions we are making are difficult and highly regrettable, particularly the job cuts. However, the downsizing is necessary to maintain a strong positioning for our news media outlets on all platforms, and more broadly to secure our Corporation's future success in an industry that is being revolutionized by the advent of digital," she said.

The affected papers include *Lac du Bonnet Leader* (Manitoba), *Lindsay Daily Post* and *Midland Free Press* (Ontario), *Le Magazine Saint-Lambert* (Quebec) and *Meadow Lake Progress* (Saskatchewan).

Three commuter-focused free dailies called 24 Hours will be closed in Ottawa, Calgary and Edmonton. Sun Media shed 500 staffers in November 2012.

The company publishes 36 paid and three free papers with a combined circulation of 15.1M.

GUARDIAN NEWS & MEDIA SHAVES LOSS

Guardian News & Media cut its annual loss 30 percent to \$46M for the year ended March 31.

The publisher of U.K.'s *Guardian* and *Observer* reported a nearly 30 percent climb in digital revenues to \$65M, which accounts for 28 percent of overall revenues.

CEO Andrew Miller called that revenue growth a "striking figure."

He said GN&M is reaping the benefits due to its early commitment to digital.

The Guardian's daily circulation dipped 11 percent to 187K copies per-day, while the Observer's circ fell 13 percent to 212,376.

The company's websites attracted 23M unique visitors in May.



MEDIA NEWS**MARTIN SUCCEEDS KENT ATOP TURNER**

John Martin, chief financial and administrative officer at Time Warner, will succeed Philip Kent as Turner Broadcasting chairman in January.

Kent helmed the owner of CNN, TBS, TNT, Cartoon Network and Turner Classic Movies since 2003.

TW CEO Jeff Bewkes wrote a memo to praise Kent for leading Turner "through a period of rapid change with an unwavering focus on both driving the business forward and making sure that Turner remains a place that nurtures and rewards talent."

Martin is a former Wall Street analyst who joined TW five years ago.

He had been in charge of accounting, finances, mergers and acquisitions.

WAPO BUYS INDUSTRIAL

Washington Post Co., in its latest diversification move, has acquired Forney Corp., a supplier of products and systems that control combustion processes at electrical utilities and industrial plants.

Founded in 1927, Forney pushed overseas by selling burner management systems in China.

It is part of United Technologies Corp. climate, controls and security operation.

Don Graham, CEO of WaPo Co., said the deal is part of his company's strategy of investing in entities with "demonstrated earnings potential and strong management teams attracted to our long-term investment horizon."

WaPo Co. did not disclose the price it paid.

The media company, which generates the bulk of revenues and profit from the Kaplan for-profit education unit, also took a stake in FaithStreet.com, a digital outreach and "giving platform" for places of worship.

MEN'S HEALTH ALUM JOINS ABC

Dave Zinzenko, who served a dozen years as editor-in-chief of *Men's Health*, has joined ABC News as nutrition and wellness editor.

In a memo to staff, ABC News president Ben Sherwood said Zinzenko would appear on all programs and platforms.

He will help "audiences understand the whole picture of healthy living, from diet to exercise to sleep."

Most recently, Zinzenko was consulting editorial director of Men's Fitness.

He is author of "Eat This, Not That!," "The Abs Diet," and "The 8-Hour Diet."

Zinzenko has been a contributor to "Oprah," "Ellen," "The View," "The Biggest Loser," and "Dr. Oz."

SEA WORLD TAPS PR FIRM IN DOC RESPONSE

Aquatic amusement park Sea World is leaning on entertainment shop 42 West to mount an unusually aggressive response to "Blackfish," a critical documentary about one of the park's orca whales.

The *New York Times* dissected Sea World's PR response to the film, bucking a history of businesses targeted by documentaries of choosing to lie low, "hoping the issues will remain out of the public mainstream and

eventually fade away without much fuss."

42 West is helping the park get animal handlers and executives out for interviews and countering some of the film's claims about its care of the whale, which attacked and killed a trainer in 2010.

Read the Times report at <http://nyti.ms/16P39CZ>.

MASSIMINO PLUGS INTO SOUNDEXCHANGE

Julia Massimino, who spent more than a dozen years on the staff of Congressman Howard Berman (D-Cal.), is the new VP-global public policy at SoundExchange, the non-profit performance rights group repping the recorded music business.

She's in charge of government affairs, legislative matters and strategy.

SE last year brought in former XM Satellite Radio PR exec Marie Knowles as VP/comms.

Berman was chairman of the subcommittee on courts, intellectual property and the Internet. Massimino served as his chief of staff, handling copyright, antitrust and communications issues.

Michael Huppe, CEO of SoundExchange said Massimino has the ability to "master the substance of difficult issues and the skillset to work with diverse constituencies to reach a common goal."

Massimino also worked for former Congressman Bill Delahut (D-Mass.).

MEDIA, PR COALITION NEEDED

The latest Gallup poll shows only 23% of Americans have "a great deal" of confidence in newspapers.

Newspaper ad revenues, which were \$44.9 billion in 2003, were \$25.3 billion last year including web ads and "non-daily publication ads." Newspaper ad revenues were \$22.3B.

Traditional media have lost a lot of their clout and stealing a lot of their thunder are "social media."

SM at times resembles a bar-room brawl. *New York Times* columnist Joe Nocera on July 16 headlined, "My Case Against Twitter."

Nocera agrees it can be "a personalized news engine" but also that it "can be so hateful. It can bring out the worst in people, giving them license to tweet things they would never say in real life."

He notes that CNBC commentator Douglas Kass regularly tweeted his thoughts but stopped after being hit with "the foulest language imaginable." He even received life-threatening tweets."

Twitter, writes Nocera, with its 140-character limit, "exacerbates our society-wide attention deficit disorder: nothing can be allowed to take more than a few seconds to write or read." The "negatives outweigh the positives" of Twitter, says Nocera.

What is needed now is for newspaper executives to meet with executives and elected officers of the PR groups to tackle the issue of the disintegration of mass media.

Caroline Little has succeeded John Sturm as president and CEO of the Newspaper Assn. of America.

Sturm retired at the end of 2011, collecting a final pay of \$4,062,204. He had been CEO since 1995.

— Jack O'Dwyer

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**MATTER REACHES WEST**

Massachusetts tech firm Matter Communications has acquired the year-old boutique Portland, Ore., firm of Kent Hollenbeck, a former senior VP of Waggener Edstrom.

Hollenbeck takes a VP/West Coast title with Matter, which sees the Portland market as a central hub for business in Seattle, the Bay Area and Boise. Matter also adds Hollenbeck's client roster – HTC, Redapt -- and small staff.

Matter CEO Scott Signore noted Portland itself has a budding tech scene and offered "the best combination of characteristics important to our business."

Matter's West Coast and Mountain West roster includes Crucial (Boise), Lexar Media (Fremont, Calif.) and StillSecure (Superior, Colo.).

Two existing clients, Esri and TriQuint, have major Portland operations.

Newburyport, Mass.-based Matter has outposts in Providence, R.I., and Boston. The firm was up 21% last year with \$7M in revenue.

Hollenbeck, former PR manager for Gateway, spent 16 years at WaggenEd before setting up his firm in 2012.



Hollenbeck

ATLANTA FIRMS AIM AT START-UPS

Trevelino/Keller has teamed with three other Atlanta shops to form Groovy Studios, a creative and PR services outfit aimed at the start-up market.

Joining T/K is Bchord, Luxeve Media and Digital Shake. The firm said services can be rendered for \$2K or less, including social media, messaging, website design, video production and similar offerings.

T/K principal Dean Trevelino said the venture aims to be a more robust offering among plenty of similar partnerships.

"There's no shortage of 'cheap' web and branding providers for entrepreneurs, but they can be classified as short on strategy," he said, adding that Groovy Studios aims to produce longer-term strategies for clients.

Info: groovy-studios.com.

WS OPENS IN TURKEY, KUWAIT

Weber Shandwick has planted flags in Turkey and Kuwait after relying on affiliates and regional outposts in those countries for years.

The Interpublic firm hired Seda Yalcin from Grayling to lead its Turkey operation as CEO.

She led Grayling's public affairs practice and headed business development for the firm's Turkey operation in Istanbul. Previous stints included the European Commission and PA shop Interel in Brussels.

Strateji Tanitim was recently WS' Turkey affiliate.

Kuwait is WS' fifth Mideast office and is led by GM Rosie Muhanna.

Colin Byrne, who heads the firm's EMEA operations, which also include Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Egypt, called Turkey and Kuwait "growth markets" for the firm.

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York Area**

BPCM, New York/Langham Place Fifth Avenue, luxury hotel, for U.S. PR

Indra PR, New York/James Valenti, American-born tenor, for PR.

The10company, New York/Landor Associates, WPP-owned brand consulting and design firm, as AOR for PR, following a competitive review.

East

Greenough, Boston/Fazenda Coffee Roasters, 15-year-old Boston coffee roaster, as AOR focused on traditional and social media.

Schubert B2B, Philadelphia/AGC Chemicals Americas, for an expanded relationship to include marketing, PR and social media.

Qorvis Communications, Washington, D.C./BGR, for PR for The Burger Joint, including research, messaging, media outreach, events and promotions.

French/West/Vaughan, Raleigh/Dominion Realty Partners, co-developer of Raleigh's PNC Plaza, to manage media relations, branding and marketing strategy for the company's newest Class A office tower, Charter Square.

Southeast

The Wilbert Group, Atlanta/Hubzu, online listing service for home sales; FrontDoor Communities, energy efficient home designer; Cortland Partners, acquirer and developer of multifamily communities; Multi Housing Advisors, brokerage firm focused on multi-housing market; Franklin Street, commercial real estate; KontrolFreeK, gaming accessories; Renewvia Energy, solar energy solutions, for PR.

Midwest

3rd Coast PR, Chicago/Sleep Innovations, foam sleep comfort products, for PR, including product launches and social media management. Work includes media relations, microsite development, video and tradeshow support for the kickoff of a Stanley licensed utility mat.

McCullough PR, North Canton, Ohio/"Snake & Mongo\$e," feature film about drag racing, as AOR for media relations targeting the national automotive press, as well as grassroots efforts focused on dragstrips, racing venues and auto clubs. The film, set for theatrical release Sept. 6 and DVD on Nov. 9, tells the story of rivals Don "the Snake" Prudhomme and Tom "the Mongo\$e" McEwen.

Southwest

Halliburton IR, Dallas/Unique Underwriters, insurance sales and marketing, to develop an IR program.

West

Bolt PR, Irvine, Calif./BDS Marketing, for launch of its Brand Shops service; Stafani Rose, singer/songwriter and actress; The Blind Pig Kitchen + Bar, opening this month; Teen Driving Solutions, non-profit driver education school, and Totally Rad!, photo editing programs, for PR, marketing and social media.

Mayo Communications, Los Angeles/Job Barnes, jazz musician and producer, for PR to promote his tours, music and a new carbon-fiber trumpet.

NEWS OF SERVICES

PR Video Shop West Glen Shuttered After 40 Years
West Glen Communications, a long-running video PR services provider based in New York, has shuttered amid a Chapter 7 bankruptcy filing.

Chairman and president Stan Zeitlin signed the filing in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York on July 16, citing assets of less than \$50K and liabilities from \$1M-\$10M. Creditors range from 100-199.

The firm produced PSAs, video news releases and conducted services like satellite media tours over four decades in the PR business. It started out in 1970 distributing sponsored films and rode the video PR wave from 16mm, to VHS and Beta, DVD and digital.

While demand for digital video services has surged over the past few years, many PR firms now have in-house studios or contract with small start-ups or freelancers as the cost of production has declined.

West Glen marked its 40th year in 2010.

Video PR giant Medialink went through a rocky period before being acquired in 2009. Another long-running VNR firm On the Scene Productions went under that same year.

EMPLOYERS WATCH FOR TECH ABUSES

Owners of PR firms and other businesses need to have strict policies for employees who download proprietary information to their smart phones and tablets, says David Rosenbaum, president of Real-Time Computer Services, New York.

Employees who bring their own devices to work are becoming the norm, says Rosenbaum, whose firm works with clients to create legal agreements that can be used by management.

"Many employees don't want to use separate devices for business and personal purposes," he notes.

A problem arises when a PR firm's employee, who has had remote access to the firm's e-mail, calendar and contacts and other confidential information, suddenly leaves the firm for one reason or another.

Such information, improperly used, could be damaging to a client and compromise the firm's competitive position, said Rosenbaum. PR firms are especially at risk because they deal with sensitive client information, he adds.

PR firms should tell employees that business data compiled by them should automatically be uploaded to the company's server, says Rosenbaum, whose 31-year-old firm offers consulting services related to technology. PR firm clients have included Manning, Selvage & Lee, Marina Maher Communications and the LVM Group.

Employers also have to check that employee devices are adequately backed up and protected from malware and spyware.

Younger employees, particularly, are into "gadgets" and like to have their own devices, says Rosenbaum. Some of them even consider employer computer setups as "stodgy."

Letting employees use their own devices can cut computer bills of the employer although there are risks involved, he notes.

PEOPLE

US AIR RECRUITS DELTA EXEC FOR MERGER

US Airways has brought in Delta vet Christine Kelly Singley in a top post as US Air combines its PR operations with merger partner American Airlines.

Singley, general manager of corporate comms. at Delta, takes a managing director, corporate comms., title at Tempe-based US Airways, which last month promoted Elise Eberwein to an executive VP role overseeing communications.

The airline said Singley will play a key role in combining the two companies' communications departments under the American Airlines name and US Airways CEO Doug Parker.

Earlier this month, US Airways promoted John McDonald to VP of corporate communications and public affairs at the new American. Current American VP of communications Andy Backover, a former journalist who has been with the company for seven years, is leaving.

Singley joined Delta in 2004.

American and US Airways announced their \$11B merger in January 2012.

PITNEY BOWES TAPS CA'S HUGHES AS CCO

Bill Hughes, chief communications officers at IT giant CA Technologies, the former Computer Associates, has moved to \$4B mailing services provider Pitney Bowes in that same title.

Hughes reports to newly minted chief marketing officer Abby Kohnstamm at Stamford, Conn.-based PB and takes a seat on the company's executive management team. Kohnstamm joined in May.

Publicly traded Pitney Bowes posted 2012 revenue of \$4.4B.

At CA, Hughes led internal and external communications, including media relations, sustainability, social media and government relations. He joined CA in 2006 from IMS Health, where he was VP of global comms. and public affairs.

Earlier, he was with IBM as corporate VP of media relations and head of comms. for the Asia Pacific region based in Tokyo.

On the agency front, Hughes was a GM for Burson-Marsteller in Los Angeles and senior VP/GM at Shandwick. Sheryl Battles is VP, corporate comms., at Pitney Bowes. Carol Wallace handles external communications.



Hughes

CIGNA COMMS CHIEF TO EXIT FOR J&J

Cigna communications chief and APCO Worldwide alum Maggie FitzPatrick is slated to join Johnson & Johnson in September as its chief communications officer, following the exit of Ray Jordan last year.

FitzPatrick on September 16 will take a VP-public affairs and corporate comms. title along with the CCO role under global corporate affairs VP Michael Sneed at New Brunswick, N.J.-based J&J. Her scope includes directing an integrated communications strategy encompassing external communications and public affairs.

FitzPatrick moved to Cigna in 2010 from APCO, where she spent 13 years rising to executive VP.

WHEAT GROWERS SEW PR IN GMO FLAP

U.S. wheat growers are working with outside PR counsel in the aftermath of the Dept. of Agriculture's disclosure in May that genetically modified wheat was found growing in Oregon.

Kansas City-based Global Prairie, a five-year-old agriculture and food PR specialist founded by Fleishman-Hillard alums, was tapped last year after a competitive pitch to work with the Wheat Innovation Alliance, a coalition of wheat groups developing a PR plan for biotech wheat.

The firm has since helped various organizations like the National Association of Wheat Growers and U.S. Wheat Associates tackle concerns and global media interest over the Oregon discovery.

"The amount of attention this has gotten is miles and miles above the requests we normally get on a day-to-day basis," NAWG director of communications Melissa Kessler told the agriculture trade publication *Capital Press*.

Global Prairie, led by former FH Kansas City GM Anne St. Peter, has a handful of U.S. offices, including Washington, D.C.

The Agriculture Dept.'s revelation on the GM wheat discovery rekindled a debate about GM foods and sparked Asian buyers of U.S. wheat including Japan and Korea to postpone imports. Korea has lifted its ban but Japan's remains in place. The USDA in June called the discovery an "isolated incident" limited to a single field in a single farm and said it is working to restore trade ties.

Wheat growers may find a boon in China, where the country's wheat crop failed this month and the USDA more than doubled its forecast for China's imports.

The wheat found in Oregon was the same variety developed and tested by Monsanto from 1998-05 and the company since May has mounted a multipronged PR response to contain the story.

FH KNOCKS OFF 11 FOR IL HEALTH EX BIZ

FleishmanHillard beat 11 competitors to win a competitive pitch to guide public outreach and reputation work for Illinois' health insurance exchange under the Affordable Care Act.

The Prairie State, which is partnering with the federal government to run its exchange, issued an RFP in mid-April for the assignment covering PR and communications for the Illinois Health Insurance Marketplace.

Budget for advertising and PR over three years is \$35M.

Pitching against FH were Weber Shandwick, Golin-Harris, JWT, Finn Partners, CBD, Paco Communications, Common-Ground Marketing, Machete, E-3 Group and Metropolitan Group, according to a state tabulation of bidders.

FH's pact, which is not yet finalized, has a base year with two year-long options.

Obama campaign veteran Brian Gorman oversees advertising and PR for the Illinois exchange.

Insurance exchanges will start offering coverage Oct. 1 under the ACA. FH, a unit of Omnicom based in St. Louis, will lead the work from its Chicago office.

MS REVIEWS TOURISM, ECONDEV PR PACTS

Mississippi is reviewing its tourism and economic development marketing communications accounts with RFP processes this month.

The Mississippi Development Authority, the Jackson-based entity that oversees the account and is handling the reviews, tapped a new chief marketing officer, Marlo Dorsey, in December. Dorsey is a former CEO of Internet provider Cybergate with marketing and economic development experience in the state.

On the tourism front, the Magnolia State, which uses the tagline "Find Your True South," wants agency pitches to woo tourism and recreation travelers, meetings and conventions, as well as film location scouts on a three-year contract.

PR, digital, advertising, international marketing and other disciplines are covered in a broad scope of work for the tourism account.

The resulting three-year pact carries two options years, as well.

The Ramey Agency, Jackson, is the incumbent. Proposals are due July 24.

The economic development account RFP is open through July 31. While it covers similar duties like PR and digital, its focus is on recruiting business and promoting the state as a "choice business location" for investment and existing industry. It currently has three websites used for the task, including Mississippi.org, aerospace-mississippi.org, and mscreativeeconomy.org.

GENERAL MILLS, HERSHEY VET TO WCG

David Witt has joined San Francisco-based WCG as group director-brand strategy and engagement in Minneapolis, where he will establish a beachhead for the healthcare/tech firm.

As senior manager of consumer engagement, Witt worked on GM brands (Yoplait, Pillsbury, Progresso and Cheerios) in social media and word of mouth marketing. He created GM's engagement blogs called MyGetTogether, MyBlogSpark and Psst.

At Hershey, Witt was director of global marketing and brand PR, where his team pushed two of its brands into the top ten social media brands ranking.

Witt was elected chairman of the World of Mouth Marketing Assn. and currently serves as a board member.

PB TAPS HUGHES FOR TOP PR SPOT

Bill Hughes, chief communications officers at IT giant CA Technologies, the former Computer Associates, has moved to \$4B mailing services provider Pitney Bowes in that same title.

Hughes reports to newly minted chief marketing officer Abby Kohnstamm at Stamford, Conn.-based PB and takes a seat on the company's executive management team. Kohnstamm joined in May.

Publicly traded Pitney Bowes posted 2012 revenue of \$4.4B.

At CA, Hughes led internal and external comms., including media relations, sustainability, social media and gov't relations. He joined CA in 2006 from IMS Health, where he was VP of global comms. and public affairs.

Following is an open letter to Brian E. Keeley, president and CEO of Baptist Health South Florida, a group of hospitals with 1,728 beds that had revenues of \$2.3 billion in 2012.

Dear Mr. Keeley:

I know you are a busy man and so am I so I will cut to the chase. I'm a reporter fighting a press boycott by PR Society of America, the organization that Baptist Health PR director Kathy Barbour seeks to head.

I don't mind being called a "liar," "flat-out liar," "pig," "peasant," "disgusting," "unethical" and other choice words by the Society and its supporters. Nor do I mind the screaming threat by an Assembly delegate to beat me "to a pulp" delivered an inch from my nose.

I did mind an entire day of my Assembly notes being stolen from my conference bag in 2003 when my back was turned. The Society then refused to let me hear the tape of the Assembly. I did mind being blocked from the Assembly, exhibit hall and all sessions at the 2012 conference in San Francisco. I face a similar boot at the conference in Philadelphia Oct. 26-29.

I have read the 21 pages of the Code of Ethics of Baptist Health in which you say all employees must show a commitment to "honesty, integrity and transparency." You define integrity as "doing the right thing when no one is watching." The use of "Baptist" in the name of the hospital invokes religious principles which include truthfulness and fair dealing. The 16 million-member Southern Baptist convention is the second largest U.S. religious body after the Catholic Church. There is an added burden on the hospital to do the "right thing" in this instance.

Barbour Nomination Assured

Time is of the essence in this matter since the nominating committee will meet Aug. 2-4 in Chicago and will almost certainly pick Barbour for chair-elect.

Six of the last seven chairs have been men so the likelihood of Barbour opponent Blake Lewis getting the nod is slim. Women comprise more than 70% of the Society's membership and they have been beefing about the dominance of men in the top post.

Nomination of Barbour will subject her to close examination and perhaps a challenge by a write-in candidate. This is possible until Sept. 26, a month before the election.

But how can anyone challenge Barbour if they don't know her views on 11 key issues facing the Society which are in a link at the end of this letter.

An initial reading of her 12-page submission to the nomcom found the statement that Baptist Health is ranked "No. 1 nationally as the Best Place for Diversity" by *Fortune* magazine

Fortune said it has no such ranking. Baptist Health places No. 42 on the magazine's list of "The 100 Best Companies to Work For." BH has 13,302 employees of whom 74% are women and 72% are minorities.

It does not offer domestic partner benefits to same-sex couples. Baptists only recognize marriage as being

between one man and one woman. It does not provide 100% health coverage. It allows telecommuting and a "compressed work week." It provides on-site child care.

Barbour, as treasurer in 2012, is responsible for withholding IRS Form 990 from the 2012 Assembly. This form gives the pay packages of eight Society staffers making \$100K+.

She is responsible for misleading financial reporting in the 2011 audit because the Society books dues as cash when FASB Section 958-605-25-1 (as well as common sense) demands that income be booked as earned. This practice boosts net assets by about \$2.5 million.

Society Leaders Mum

This e-mail is being sent to you because no officer of the PR Society has spoken to me since 2005.

Barbour has not responded to e-mails from me since she joined the board in 2009. She ignored an e-mail sent last week to her and the other candidates asking them to state their positions on 11 issues confronting the Society.

Not only is this reporter snubbed, but so is the entire membership. Last year's chair Gerry Corbett spoke to none of the 110 chapters as far as we can determine.

This year's chair, Mickey Nall, has spoken to one—Atlanta, his own chapter. Rosanna Fiske, 2011 chair, spoke to two chapters.

No Society chair has addressed the New York chapter membership in more than 25 years. Previously, the chair spoke to the final New York meeting in June.

Appearing in New York would give the four PR trade publications based in the city a chance to question the chairs (*O'Dwyer's*, *PR Week/U.S.*, *PR News* and *PRnewser*).

The last press conference of Society leaders was in 1993 at the Orlando annual conference. Perhaps Barbour will talk to you.

What Do I Want? Access; Questions Answered

I hope Barbour will live up to your Code of Ethics in which you say Baptist Health is against "wrongdoing." What could be right about blocking a reporter from his or her duties?

The National Press Club examined PR Society's charges against me and talked to a Society official. NPC not only rejected the charges and urged the Society to stop the boycott, but sent its statement to 390 major media. New York State Senator Liz Krueger "heartily" endorsed the NPC stand on her official stationery.

If Barbour cannot get the Society to change its policies, she should withdraw as a candidate.

The abusive practices of the Society have caused its membership total to stagnate for nearly 13 years. It had 20,266 members in 2002 but only has "21,000" now, the number posted on its website. Here is a link to 11 major abusive areas in the Society: <http://tinyurl.com/9uvowzpz>

(Readers are invited to answer the questions to candidates and e-mail to their responses jack@odwyerpr.com or mail to 271 Madison Ave., #600, NY NY 10016). The questions are at <http://tinyurl.com/mmyerk6>.

— *Jack O'Dwyer*