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CAPITAL CITY SEEKS FINANCIAL SERVICES PR

DC's Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking wants to hire a firm to handle branding, marketing, PR and public engagement.



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Capital City's financial sector had been robust.

The pandemic exacerbated financial problems for people with poor credit, no or low emergency savings or unsound spending habits.

Though DISB offers a range of economic development and financial support services, it "has been hindered by a lack of recognition and identity that positions its brand in a manner that is attractive to the District's residential and business communities," according to the RFP.

DISB is looking for a "clear communications strategy" to leverage its assets in ways that resonate with a variety of audiences."

Its PR partner will create a communications platform that "articulates DISB's promise—confirming what the agency stands for, its unique value proposition and how it can carve out unique and differentiated places in the minds of our targeted audiences, building on previous experience, findings and recommendations."

DISB plans to issue a one-year contract with options covering four additional one-year periods.

Proposals are due June 21 at DC's e-portal.

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

EDELMAN HIRES BECKER FOR INTEGRATION

Edelman has named Christoph Becker global chair of integration, a newly created role.



Christoph Becker

Becker comes to Edelman from gyro, a global creative agency he co-founded 12 years ago and most recently served as CEO and chief creative officer.

Before that, he was chairman and chief creative officer at FCB New York.

At Edelman, Becker will work to drive integration across the network's full array of offerings, including creative, data & intelligence, digital and strategic planning. He will be based in New York and report to CEO Richard Edelman.

"Christoph's global experience and ability to integrate diverse groups of talent make him a perfect fit for this role," said Edelman.

INDABA RAPS STAGWELL'S DEAL FOR MDC

Indaba Capital Management, which opposes Stagwell's revised offer for MDC Partners, criticizes it as a "sweetheart transaction."

ICM managing partner Derek Schrier dismisses the \$100M enhanced bid as "insufficient" and "a small and arbitrary number" when compared to MDC's \$1.8B valuation.

In his June 8 letter to Stagwell CEO Mark Penn, Schrier questions the independence of three directors nominated June 7 by Stagwell for board seats since "they all appear to have professional overlap with you."

ICM "is ready and willing to engage with you to determine what it will take to earn Indaba's vote," wrote Schrier.

MDC's shareholder meeting is scheduled for June 22.

Stagwell's PR units are SKDKnickerbocker and Sloane & Co, while MDC owns [Allison+Partners](#), Veritas, [Hunter](#) and [KWT Global](#).



NORTH SIXTH GROUP INVESTS IN NEWS DIRECT

North Sixth Group, which includes N6A Agency, is making a strategic investment in News Direct, a news and content distribution company serving PR, IR, corporate communications and marketing professionals.

Founded by former Business Wire president Gregg Castano, who serves as CEO, News Direct provides industry-first, proprietary solutions including standalone multimedia distribution capabilities, a collaborative content studio with task automation and AI-assisted editing. "News Direct is uniquely positioned at the intersection of technology, content and analytics," said North Sixth Group chairman Matt Rizzetta.

FH FINDS HINDKLEV FOR MEDIA WORK

Trine Hindklev has joined FleishmanHillard as senior VP/global media lead for the health & life sciences group.

Hindklev moved to the Omnicom unit from Guided Knowledge, where was chief marketing officer. She was a founding member of the London-based startup that has developed wearables using 3D technology.

Earlier, she was executive VP at Weber Shandwick, responsible for its team of global lead media pros; senior VP for media relations at MSLGroup; and media relations practice chief at Chandler Chicco Agency.



Trine Hindklev

PHOENIX SEEKS PR FOR SCHOOL OPENINGS

The Phoenix Union High School District wants to hire a firm to conduct public outreach to address the safe opening of schools and the impacts of COVID-19 on students' academic, social, emotional, mental and health needs.



The District, which covers 220 square miles, has 22 schools, serving more than 28K students. Eighty-two percent of students are Hispanic, eight percent are Black, four percent white, two percent are Native American and two percent Asian-American. More than half (52 percent) are from homes where English is not the primary language.

Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the communications push will target a diverse group including students, parents/families/guardians, teachers, principals, school staff and civil rights organizations.

The District will award a contract to run through June 30, 2022. There will be options for four more one-year periods.

Proposals are due June 24. They go to: Phoenix Union High School District; No. 210 4502 N. Central Avenue; 4th Floor, Purchasing; Phoenix, AZ 85012

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

PPG PILOTS NORSE ATLANTIC AIRWAYS

Prime Policy Group has signed Norway's Norse Atlantic Airways, which launched in February and plans to offer US service by the end of this year.

NAA will position itself as a low-fare, low-cost carrier flying Boeing 787 Dreamliners.

Based in Oslo, NAA has targeted New York, London, Miami, London and Paris as initial destinations.

The company in May inked an agreement with the Association of Flight Attendants. It plans to hire a minimum of 700 AFA members.

PPG represents NAA on aviation matters, including US market access.

CEO Stefan Bailey and president emeritus Scott Pastrick lead the five-person lobbying team.

WPP owns PPG.

BOOTH'S EX-PEOPLE PERSON TO CLARITY PR

Former [M Booth](#) chief people officer Jody Johnson has joined [Clarity](#) as head of people and culture, a new global role.

Johnson was most recently at [The Hoffman Agency](#), where she served as senior human resources consultant.



Jody Johnson

At Clarity, Johnson will work to ensure that the agency's team members get the support, opportunities and incentive to deliver their best work.

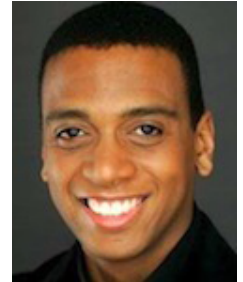
She will also lead Clarity's EDI program, overseeing its \$1M pro-bono fund for diversity driven clients and its partnership with the Diversity Marketing Consortium, formed to provide \$3M in pro-bono marketing and legal services to female and minority-led startups.

"As a business with no one to answer to other than our staff, we have free rein to continue creating an exceptional experience for our people—and I have no doubt that's what Jody will help us deliver," said Clarity chief operating officer Alex MacLavery.

ON THE MOVE

Hill+Knowlton Strategies appoints **Cecilia Zhou** as senior vice president, to lead the agency's newly integrated science, technology & internet-based innovation communications practice. Zhou will be based in the firm's Shanghai office. Most recently, she was special assistant and brand advisor to the CEO of Suning. Previously, she was head of strategy at Ogilvy's Discovery team and has worked at Burson-Marsteller and Ruder Finn. In her new position, Zhou will lead her consolidated practice team to serve multinational and Chinese clients across key technology verticals.

Allison+Partners promotes **David Richeson** to managing director, strategic analytics + digital innovation, a newly created role. Richeson joined the agency in 2019 as the senior VP of digital innovation + influence. Before coming to Allison+Partners, he served as chief of digital innovation & influence at Marina Maher Communications and chief digital officer at Fenton Communications and Kaplow Communications. In his new role, Richeson will be tasked with furthering avenues for data-driven strategy, communications and other innovative approaches to deliver greater alignment between communications strategies and business goals.



David Richeson

Pollock Communications hires **Dorree Gurdak** as senior VP of the agency's consumer division. Gurdak joins the agency from Chameleon Collective, where she was a partner and marketing communications strategist. She previously led the Boston consumer practice of Weber Shandwick for 10 years. At Pollock, Gurdak will be responsible for managing and expanding the firm. "She will bring a dynamic perspective and passion to our business and our clients' businesses," said Pollock Communications president Louise Pollock.

Hotwire promotes **Heather Craft** and **Laura Macdonald** to co-presidents of the North America business, effective July 1. Craft was previously EVP, head of B2B and Macdonald served as EVP, head of consumer. The announcement follows the promotion of Heather Kernahan to global CEO of Hotwire by parent company Enero Group. As co-presidents, Craft and Macdonald will be responsible for jointly running the business, with each taking on an area of focus. Craft will oversee client experience and Macdonald will lead on new business and marketing activities.



Heather Craft, Laura Macdonald

Addison Whitney, a Syneos Health agency and global branding firm, adds Zenmark founding partners **Greg Balla** and **Rob McDaniel** to its team. Balla is joining the agency as vice president, client experience, and McDaniel will be verbal strategist. Both are new roles at Addison Whitney. At Zenmark, Balla was also CEO and creative director, with McDaniel serving as vice president, verbal design. "Greg and Rob built an agency on the understanding that a brand name must trigger the soul of a brand," said Addison Whitney president Joe Daley.

DATA PRIVACY, SECURITY ARE TOP CONCERNS

Data privacy and security are the top issues consumers care about and are now the top challenges most expect companies to act on, according to [a new study by FleishmanHillard](#).

FleishmanHillard's biennial study, which seeks to measure the gap between consumer expectations and their actual experiences with companies and brands, analyzed insights from respondents in six countries and their experiences with more than 300 companies across 20 industries in an effort to uncover what role consumers around the world believe companies should take in addressing today's top societal, political and business challenges.



According to the study, a majority of consumers globally said that data privacy (55 percent) and data security (57 percent) are now the top issues that are most important to them.

More than half of consumers (56 percent) admitted that privacy concerns have made them less likely to use products or services from companies that use consumer data for their own benefit. As a result, only 45 percent said they're now willing to let companies collect their personal information, even when it means providing them with greater convenience and personalization.

Following data privacy and security, other top issues of consumer concern include access to affordable, quality healthcare (54 percent), violence against women and access to affordable, quality education (both 50 percent), freedom of speech (48 percent) and protecting the environment and climate change (47 percent).

When it comes to the issues on which consumers most want companies to take action, data security and privacy again topped the list (47 and 48 percent, respectively), followed by protecting the environment and climate change (44 percent), minimum wage (40 percent), income and wage gaps (38 percent) and racism and racial justice issues (33 percent).

The study undergirds the relatively newfound concept that how a brand engages with society is often viewed as more important than the customer benefits its products or services offer. Fewer than half (47 percent) of respondents said their perceptions and beliefs about a company are shaped by attributes solely related to its products or services. A third (32 percent) said those perceptions are instead shaped by a company's impact on society, and 21 percent said those perceptions come from the ways in which a company's management behaves. In fact, the FleishmanHillard study discovered that two-thirds of consumers (66 percent) believe that for a company to be more credible than its competitors, it must talk about its behaviors and impact on society as well as the environment.

In the eyes of the public, it appears a large part of this responsibility rests on the shoulders of company leaders. Two-thirds of those polled (65 percent) believe CEOs should speak up on issues that "may not have a significant impact on the business but have a significant impact on society." Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) said CEOs should have an active voice on supporting and influencing environmental policy change, and 65 percent believe CEOs should play a role influencing health policy. An additional 72 percent believe CEOs should demonstrate their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, both internally and externally.

FleishmanHillard's latest "Authenticity Gap" study surveyed more than 10,200 adults in Brazil, China, Germany, UK and the U.S. between March and April.

PRINCE ALBERT SEEKS PR TO BOOST IMAGE

Prince Albert, which is located in the heartland of Saskatchewan, is looking to hire a firm to devise a "positive storytelling strategy" to help overcome its reputation of being a lousy place to live.

The perception of Prince Albert, according to its RFP, is that it is "a community that suffers from crime, poverty, addiction and a deteriorating downtown core."



While the city admits that it faces challenges, it believes a positive storytelling push can create more favorable attitudes and opinions about it on a local, provincial and national level.

Located minutes from Saskatchewan's lake country and boreal forest, Prince Albert residents are a short drive away from recreational options including camping, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and hiking trails.

Prince Albert is confident a multi-media campaign leveraging social media as its core component can raise its profile as an attractive place to live, raise a family and do business.

The storytelling budget is \$50K. Responses to the RFP are due June 23.

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

FENTON/ARLOOK PUSHES US/PAKISTAN TIES

Fenton/Arlook has a verbal agreement to represent the Council on Pakistan Relations, the DC-based nonprofit.

It will inform US and international media about the Council's work to promote diplomatic and economic relations between the US and Pakistan.

Fenton/Arlook, which is based in Washington, is the firm of David Fenton, founder of the progressive PR firm that bears his name, and Ira Arlook, chief of advocacy campaigns at Fenton Communications.

They will distribute background materials to journalists, pen op-eds, place spokespeople in the media and conduct other PR activities.

Fenton/Arlook is to receive a fee of \$25K per month, plus out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel costs.

BPAC BANKS ON FULCRUM PA IN EQUITY PUSH

The Black Progressive Action Coalition has hired Fulcrum Public Affairs to further its push to harness the political power of Black Americans.

Its mission is to advance a progressive policy agenda that addresses the underlying structural barriers to equality and developing a "roadmap to change" to achieve those goals.

That roadmap includes expanding voting rights and access to ballots; reforming the justice system by ending racial profiling and over-policing; and advocating for economic equity by closing the racial wealth gap.

Podesta Group staffers Dana Thompson and Oscar Ramirez launched Fulcrum after the implosion of Tony Podesta's shop.

It stands as the only 100 percent Black and Latinx government relations firm in the nation's capital.

Thompson, who also was chief counsel to California Congresswoman Maxine Waters, and VP Margaret Franklin, legislative director for Florida's Al Lawson, work the BPAC business.



PR FIRMS CHALKED UP PROFITABLE 2020

U.S. PR agencies managed to remain profitable in 2020 despite the severe economic damage wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to an annual industry survey conducted by PR merger and acquisition consultancy [Gould+Partners](#).



Gould+Partners' latest Benchmarking report, which analyzes key factors affecting PR firm profitability, found that PR agencies in 2020 saw, on average, profitability reach 18.2 percent of firms' net revenues (calculated as

fee billings + markups), up from 17.4 percent in pre-pandemic 2019.

The survey's findings discovered that profitability last year was particularly high at the largest firms: PR agencies with revenues in excess of \$25 million netted average operating profits of 20.2 percent in 2020. Firms accounting for between \$3 million and \$10 million in revenues netted profitability of 18.1 percent, while firms with between \$10 million and \$25 million in revenues netted 17 percent. The smallest firms—those with under \$3 million in revenues—netted the smallest profitability, 15.8 percent.

Gould+Partners managing partner Rick Gould told *O'Dwyer's* that "there were three main reasons" that the PR sector was able to weather the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

First, Gould cited economic recovery grants and loans such as the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program, which offered billions in small business relief and provided a lifeline to retain staff that would have been laid off or furloughed. Second, many agencies in 2020 were able to get rent abated or deferred. Finally, Gould said that many firms—driven either by careful planning or a mere state of panic—made a series of line-by-line cuts in their overhead, to everything from travel and expenses to freezing salaries, pay cuts and bonuses. Indeed, the Gould+Partners report found that total overhead in 2020 averaged 23.6 percent, down from 24.8 percent in 2019.

"All of these moves went directly to the bottom line," Gould said. "By watching the numbers monthly, by managing by best practices benchmarks, [agency owners] were able to squeeze out additional profitability and move into 2021 much leaner and positioned for an even better 2021. It truly showed the resilience of the well-managed PR agencies."

When broken out by region, the report found that PR firms located in the U.S. Northeast boasted the highest average operating profits in 2020 (25.4 percent), followed by firms in Canada (22.5 percent), northern California (20.1 percent) and the U.S. Southeast (18.2 percent). Among the least profitable were firms located in the Midwest (16.9 percent), firms located in the New York City metro area (15.8 percent) and firms in the Southwest (13.8 percent).

The study also found that revenue per professional staff member averaged \$256,667 in 2020, up from \$244,840 in 2019; and staff turnover for the year averaged 18 percent, compared to 2019's 16.7 percent.

Gould+Partners' latest Benchmarking Survey was based on responses from 37 "prominent, best of class" North American PR agencies. Responses were collected in May.

ND 'CITY ON THE GROW' SEEKS BRAND UPDATE

West Fargo, which bills itself as the "City on the Grow," due to doubling its population from 2000 to 2020, wants proposals for a new brand identity and implementation strategy.

The North Dakota city is projecting only a ten percent growth rate over the next 20 years, so its brand "needs to be updated to properly represent the identity of the community," according to its RFQ.

The PR firm also will "standardize" the brand for those living in the older and newer sections of the city.

People living in the northern and original part of the city view it as a small town with close connections and established leaders. That view stands in sharp contrast with residents of the southern part of West Fargo, which is more of a suburb or bedroom community.

West Fargo wants a communications partner with public engagement, market research, long-term brand management and creative design savvy.

Melissa Richard, West Fargo's communications director, wants to receive proposals by June 21.

She's at: Attn: Melissa Richard; City of West Fargo; 800 Fourth Ave. E. Suite #1; West Fargo, ND 58078

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

FOX'S GOULD JOINS RF BLOOM

Charlie Gould, who has 27 years of cable TV and print newsroom experience, has joined RF Bloom as executive VP.

At the Ruder Finn conflict shop, Gould will counsel pharmaceutical and technology clients on media strategy and analysis. He also will handle media relations and CEO placements.

Prior to joining RF Bloom, Gould was senior producer at Fox Business Network, where he was a member of its launch team in 2007.

Before FBN, he was a producer at CNBC, MSNBC, WNYW-TV (Fox 5 in NYC), and overnight crime reporter for the *Staten Island Advance*.



Charlie Gould

INVARIANT NAMES CHRISTOPHER DIGITAL CHIEF

Invariant has added Rebecca Christopher as the DC-based lobbying firm builds out its communications and PA capabilities. She will head Invariant's digital media practice.

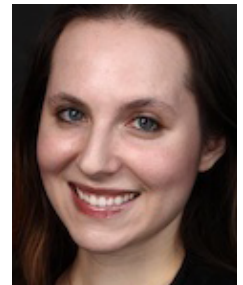
Christopher worked on the Biden for President campaign, where she developed creative and digital paid media strategies.

She was also involved in Mike Bloomberg's short-lived run for president, managing the campaign's national mail content and digital strategy.

Earlier, Christopher was at Purpose, a social impact shop that represents clients such as Women's March Global Network, March of Dimes, Discovery Inc, and Sesame Workshop.

She also had digital communications jobs in roles in Barack Obama's presidential campaigns.

Invariant founder/CEO Heather Podesta said Christopher's digital savvy will help clients forge relationships with their core audiences to influence opinion and drive action.



Rebecca Christopher

ICR LIFTS OFF VERTICAL AEROSPACE DEAL

[ICR Inc.](#) handles US media surrounding UK-based Vertical Aerospace in its \$2.2B SPAC deal engineered with Broadstone Acquisition to become a New York Stock Exchange-listed company.

As a leader in the electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft market, Vertical's goal is to make air travel carbon-free, personal and on-demand.

Launched in 2016 by Stephen Fitzpatrick, Vertical has pre-orders worth \$4B for 1,000 eVTOL aircraft from American Airlines and Avolon, along with a pre-order option from Virgin Atlantic.

American Airlines has agreed to work with VA on passenger operations and infrastructure development in the US. Vertical will partner with Virgin Atlantic for a VA-branded eVTOL network in the UK.

American Airlines, Microsoft, Rolls-Royce, Avolon and Honeywell have invested in Vertical.

ICR has Phil Denning and Dan McDermott working the media for Vertical, while Edelman's Iain Dey and Raesa Chowdhury-King represent Broadstone.

XAVIER UNIVERSITY ISSUES PR RFP

Xavier University of Louisiana, a private, historically Black, Roman Catholic university in New Orleans, seeks proposals from agencies that can develop a communications campaign to elevate the university's brand on a national level.



America's only historically Black and Catholic university, XULA enrolls approx. 3,300 students. The university wants a full-service agency that can implement an integrated communications strategy and marketing campaigns to increase Xavier's recognition nationally.

Scope of the work includes executing communication campaigns, devising media placement strategies and executing media buying plans and placements.

Proposals, due by 5 p.m. (CST) on June 18, should be submitted to chief of staff and administration VP Patrice A. Bell via email (in PDF or Word format) at: pbell2@xula.edu.

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

MERCURY ADDS TRADE/SANCTIONS PRO KUCIK

Peter Kucik, a seven-year veteran of the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, has joined Mercury as managing director in DC.

He will help clients deal with sanctions policies, as well as litigation, compliance and regulatory matters.

During the Obama administration, Kucik helped craft US sanctions on Libya and Myanmar. He also handled the easing of travel and remittances restrictions to Cuba.



Peter Kucik

At OFAC, Kucik coordinated its work with the National Security Council and the Departments of State and Commerce.

Toby Moffett, Mercury co-chair, said Kucik's "track record of success in navigating the most complex regulatory landscapes makes him a natural fit for our team."

Omnicom owns Mercury.

TENEO TALLIES UP MORE UAE RICHES

Teneo has extended its contract with the Salama Bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation for an additional four months to July 31, adding another \$1.8M in fees to the New York firm's coffers.

The Foundation is headed by the wife of Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, crown prince of Abu Dhabi and deputy supreme commander of the UAE armed forces.

The bulk of the additional fees (\$940K) is for "transformation" services, which cover "organizational visioning and articulation of outcomes, diagnostic analysis of the current state, and design of a roadmap to bring about transformation objectives."

Teneo also will get \$590K for its communications strategy and planning for the UAE Pavilion at Expo2020, and \$390K for anniversary fees connected to the UAE's "golden jubilee."



REEVEMARK BAGS BIGBEAR.AI

[Reevemark](#) is handling PR and IR for BigBear.ai, the data analytics company that is going public via a \$1.6B SPAC deal with GigCapital4.

The Columbia, MD company is a provider of artificial intelligence, machine-based learning, cloud-based analytics and cyber engineering solutions.

BigBear.ai, which generated \$140M in 2020 revenues, boasts that it is "a new leader in decision dominance" with a client roster that includes the Dept. of Defense and US intelligence agencies, as well as commercial customers across verticals such as energy, infrastructure, maritime shipping and logistical.

Its stock will trade on the NASDAQ.

Reevemark has Paul Caminiti, Delia Cannan, Pamela Greene, Luc Herbowy, Michael Anderson and Davey Roberts working the BigBear.ai SPAC.

ICR Inc.'s Brian Ruby represents GigCapital4.

YAFFE WORKS SPIRE'S NYSE BLAST-OFF

Spire Global has named Hillary Yaffe, a veteran of [Prosek Partners](#), [Edelman](#) and Burson-Marsteller, head of communications and investor relations.

The Reston-based satellite communications company is in the process of going public via a SPAC deal with NavSight Holdings.

Yaffe will handle communications across Spire's business units, which include federal, maritime, weather, aviation, Earth intelligence and space services.

She will report to CEO Peter Platzer and be based in New York.

Most recently, Yaffe was senior VP and head of communications at Lazard Asset Management.

Platzer said Yaffe's communications experience across multiple industries, as well as the capital markets, will be an invaluable asset for the company.

Spire provides comprehensive data and analytics to clients from offices in San Francisco, Boulder, Glasgow, Luxembourg and Singapore.



Hillary Yaffe

COMMENTARY



Fox News and its conservative media echo chamber push the bogus line that out-of-work Americans are deadbeats living the high life thanks to the benevolence of Uncle Sam (e.g., federal supplemental unemployment payments.)

That propaganda has spurred half of America's states—mostly led by Republican governors—to end the \$300 federal supplemental this summer.

The US Chamber of Commerce, which is hardly an ally of working-class America, has shot down the argument that workers are more content to stay at home than report to duty.

It released a poll June 3 of workers who became unemployed during the pandemic and have not yet returned to work.

Only 16 percent of those not actively seeking employment are doing so because the unemployment benefits “make it not worth looking for work.”

The respondents, though, bought into the slacker line.

Nearly three in ten (28 percent) agree “there are a lot of people who are not looking for work because they can do almost or just as well collecting unemployment benefits.”

The Chamber reports that the real reasons that people are leery about returning to work are lack of available jobs in still hard-hit sectors of the economy (28 percent), COVID-19 health concerns (26 percent) and childcare (24 percent).

Federal supplements for the unemployed end Sept. 6. President Biden has no plans to extend the measure.

The million-dollar question: Will Americans flock to the 45M jobs that paid about \$750 a week prior to the pandemic, or will businesses be forced to raise wages to attract talent?

CEOs scored PR points during the dark days of COVID-19 by foregoing their salaries to show solidarity with workforces that suffered rounds of layoffs and furloughs.

It was mostly a show, according to the Economic Policy Institute, which found any cuts by CEOs were largely symbolic.

EPI, which studied the proxy filings of 281 large companies, found the average compensation of CEOs surged 16 percent in 2020, boosted by stock options and vested stock awards. That compared to a 1.8 percent hike in average worker pay.

CEOs had a better comp year in 2020 than in 2019, where they registered a 14 percent pay boost.

EPI reports the CEO-to-worker compensation ratio jumped from 276.2 in 2019 to 307.3 in 2020. More CEO riches await as the Great Reopening of the US economy unfolds.

Turning a crisis into PR gold. Fastly, the San Francisco internet infrastructure company that was responsible for the screw-up that took down thousands of websites on June 8, averted a PR disaster by quickly taking ownership of the mess and fixing it.

Fastly provides content delivery technology to major players such as the *New York Times*, CNN, Spotify, BBC and the *Financial Times*. Each suffered a web outage.

On June 8, Nick Rockwell, Fastly's senior VP-engineering

and infrastructure, not only apologized for “a software bug,” but said the company should have anticipated it.

Within 45 minutes of discovering the problem, 95 percent of Fastly's customers were back to normal.

Wall Street cheered Fastly's handling of its crisis by sending its shares up 12.6 percent to \$56.20 on its day of potential disaster.

Hats off to Interpublic for being the first ad/PR company to publish its Sustainability Accounting Standards Report as part of its commitment to address environmental, social and governance issues.

CEO Philippe Krakowsky said sustainable transformation is an imperative for Interpublic.

The company understands that to address climate change, it must undergo behavioral change, according to Krakowsky. Those changes include travel policies, energy-efficient buildings and responsible consumption while at work, whether that's home-based or in-office.

Interpublic also is committed to 100 percent renewable electricity by 2030 for its entire portfolio.

Canada's TC Energy, which fought tooth and nail for approval to construct the Keystone XL pipeline, made a graceful exit from the project on June 9.

Environmental groups had used Keystone to fund-raise and bolster awareness of global warming for years.

Keystone XL, which was proposed in 2008, was to carry “dirty oil” extracted from Canada's tar sands to the Gulf Coast for export overseas.

In its statement confirming the termination of Keystone XL, TC thanked its partners for their support of the pipeline.

Formerly known as TransCanada, TC said it came up with a “first-of-its-kind, industry-leading plan to operate the pipeline with net-zero emissions.”

TC will “apply this level of ingenuity across our business going forward, including our current evaluation or the potential to power existing US assets with renewable energy.”

Consumers are skeptical about Corporate America's Pride motivation. Morning Consult is celebrating Pride Month by releasing a poll that found 31 percent of US adults believe brands engage in Pride initiatives primarily to get publicity.

Twenty-nine percent say companies celebrate Pride for a mixture of doing good and getting positive PR. Only 15 percent say companies show their Pride primarily to do good. A quarter of the respondents don't know or have no opinion.

Morning Consult found among LGBTQ+ people, 24 percent say companies connect with Pride for PR purposes, 29 percent say it's a combination of doing good and PR, and 20 percent believe it's primarily to do good.

“Visibility is great, but nowadays, it's about how your campaign is stepping up and showing that you support the community,” Spencer Harvey, communications manager at GLAAD, told Morning Consult.

Supporting Pride is a lot more than just waving a rainbow flag for a month.

—Kevin McCauley