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O'Dwyer's Newsletter



The Inside News of
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FL ENVIRO. AGENCY FLOATS MARKETING RFP

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the government agency responsible for leading environmental protection, regulation and management efforts in the Sunshine State, has issued a Request for Proposal for agencies specializing in marketing campaign services.



The FDEP, which helps residents and businesses comply with Florida's environmental regulations for water and air pollution, also manages and protects state lands, wetlands and shorelines and oversees the Florida reef system.

The FDEP is seeking proposals from multiple vendors that can provide a suite of services, including: creative and content development (creative concept development, copywriting, art direction, design and studio); digital development (digital strategy, digital design, web design, development and analytics); account management and planning; marketing analysis, media planning and placement; and production management services.

Proposals should be sent to:
Bureau of General Services - Procurement Section
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3800 Commonwealth Blvd, MS93
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000
All bids should be labeled with the RFP#: 2019011.
Deadline for proposals is March 20 at 3 p.m.
Questions should be forwarded to procurement officer Belinda Croft, Belinda.Croft@dep.state.fl.us.

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

KETCHUM'S JONES JOINS FINN'S HEALTH UNIT

Tom Jones, who headed Ketchum's North American health practice, has joined independent shop Finn Partners as head of the health & wellness practice.

He reports to Kristie Kuhl, US pharma chief and managing partner of the New York and Chicago health groups.

Jones will spearhead Finn's patient activation effort. Kuhl called "enabling consumers to have a voice in their health experience" one of the biggest challenges facing the sector.

Prior to Ketchum, Jones led Makovsky's health unit and worked as executive director of communications for the primary care division of Novartis.



Tom Jones

HUNTSWORTH'S PR UNIT REVENUES SLIP 5%

Huntsworth's PR revenues dipped five percent in 2018 to \$95M and profit plummeted 14.2 percent to \$7.8M following a reorganization charge.

PR flagship Grayling continued in the doldrums as revenues dropped 7.6 percent to \$50M. It swung to a \$520K loss from a \$910K profit in 2017.

Huntsworth CEO Paul Taaffe said Grayling Europe suffered a deterioration in profitability, while the Middle East operation slipped due to the end of a "one-off contract." The US and UK businesses enjoyed profit gains.

Red consumer group had a four percent profit slippage, though business perked up during the second-half. Citigate Dewe Rogerson posted flat revenue of \$28.4M. Profits rose 19 percent to \$5.3M.



Paul Taaffe

Though Huntsworth has been focused on expanding its healthcare unit, Taaffe said PR "continues to remain an important part" of the overall business, contributing 15 percent of profits.

QORVIS GOES TO WORK FOR YEMEN

The Government of Yemen has turned to Qorvis Communications for support in Washington

The MSLGroup unit, which is in the process of filing a contract with Yemen's DC embassy, is expected to provide PR, media relations, events, content creation, stakeholder engagement, research and polling services.

Qorvis has been Saudi Arabia's "go-to firm" since the 9/11 terror attacks. Fifteen of the 19 Sept. 11 terrorists were from Saudi Arabia.

The agency has been promoting Saudi humanitarian relief to Yemen in the areas of education, health, infrastructure and agriculture sectors.

COOK PROVIDES PR RECIPE TO MATTEL

Former Brew PR CEO Dena Cook is joining Mattel as executive VP and global head of communications and public relations. Before working at Brew, Cook was a senior VP at Zeno Group and has managed client accounts at FleishmanHillard.

At Mattel, Cook will oversee all external and internal communications, with primary responsibility for managing and executing on Mattel's corporate communications strategy across global audiences. She will report to Mattel chairman and CEO Ynon Kreiz, whose goal is "to transform Mattel into an IP-driven, high-performing toy company."

NEVADA DMV NEEDS AD, MEDIA SERVICES

The Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles has issued an RFP for agencies specializing in integrated marketing and media buying services.

The four-year contract includes the development of marketing strategies, media and materials to be utilized in two separate NDMV advertising campaigns: one that informs NV residents about NDMV services; and another that raises awareness among citizens regarding automobiles that violate air quality standards. The contract also calls for developing media buy schedules and purchasing advertisements.

Scope of the work includes development of integrated marketing communication strategies and tactics in alignment with the NDMV's communications plans and goals; brand development; project management; advising the NDMV on advertising and marketing opportunities; development of foreign language materials such as public education messaging that targets Hispanic customers; ad production; graphic and website design; ad measurement work; and delivery of advertising and campaign creative materials.

Anticipated start date for the contract is June 2019, with the contract to run for a four-year term ending June 30, 2023 with the option to renew for an additional two-year term within the state's discretion.

NDMV's estimated budget for the four-year contract, based on current funding levels, is approximately \$1.4 million.

Deadline to submit bids is 2 p.m. (PT) on March 14. Vendors must submit bids through the State's NevadaEPro website, nevadaepro.com, and register with the state. The NDMV RFP bid number is: 81DMV-S532.

Contact is purchasing officer Heather Moon, hmoon@admin.nv.gov.

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

FACEBOOK'S STEINFELD TO SOFTBANK

Matt Steinfeld, who was director of policy communications at Facebook, is joining Japanese telecommunications giant Softbank Group as corporate communications director on April 1.

At FB, he focused on issues such as data privacy, cybersecurity, election integrity and safety. He joined the company following its 2014 acquisition of WhatsApp, where he was global communications director and adviser to co-founders Jan Koum and Brian Acton. Earlier, Steinfeld was at WPP's Glover Park Group.

Softbank is pushing for federal approval of the merger of its 80 percent-owned Sprint with T-Mobile.

It has been beefing up its US PR capabilities since the November hire of Gary Ginsberg, former Time Warner/News Corp. executive and Clinton White House alum, as head of communications.

Softbank last month added Sarah Lubman, ex-Brunswick Group partner and *Wall Street Journal* reporter, as partner, corporate communication.



Matt Steinfeld

EX-FOX PRESIDENT SHINE JOINS TEAM TRUMP

White House deputy chief of staff for communications Bill Shine has resigned. The former Fox News co-president will join Trump's re-election campaign as a senior advisor.

Shine joined the White House staff in July 2018. He left Fox following a sexual harassment scandal that resulted in both Bill O'Reilly and Roger Ailes leaving the network. Though Shine was never accused of sexual harassment himself, there were claims by several Fox employees and execs that he ignored complaints about Ailes and O'Reilly.

His presence in the White House was seen a sign of the close relationship between Trump and Fox News.

The Trump campaign has been staffing up in the past few weeks, bringing on communications director Tim Murtaugh, press secretary Kayleigh McEnany and strategic communications director Marc Lotter.

"Bill Shine has done an outstanding job working for me and the administration," Trump said in a statement, adding that Shine will be "totally involved" in his 2020 campaign.



Bill Shine

'EVOLUTIONARY CHANGES' AT SVC

Sard Verbinnen & Co. has promoted president Paul Verbinnen to the co-CEO spot alongside George Sard, who remains chairman of the firm. Andrew Cole and Paul Kranhold move up to co-presidents.

Cole, a 21-year veteran of SVC in New York and San Francisco, was COO with full-time client responsibility. Kranhold, a 14-year veteran in charge of west coast and Asia operations, is a former head of AT&T corporate PR and press secretary for ex-California Gov. Pete Wilson.

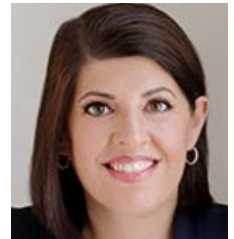
The changes, according to the firm, "reflect evolving management roles, longer-term planning and further development of a talented team."

The firm also upped Jared Levy, Megan Bouchier, Meghan Gavigan, Marc Minardo and Chris Kittredge to partners.

ON THE MOVE

DiGennaro Communications has brought on **Stephanie Agresta** as senior vice president, client service and business development. Agresta comes to DiGennaro from SaaS tech platform Qnary, where she was global director of enterprise growth and remains on the advisory board. In her new role, she will oversee a portfolio of clients, acting as a strategic counselor while also working to expand the agency's client roster.

Allison+Partners has promoted **Serina Tan** to managing director, Asia Pacific, a newly created role. Tan will continue in her existing role as general manager of the agency's Singapore office, and will work to foster greater collaboration between the more than 140 team members across the region.



Stephanie Agresta

PR LESSONS FROM AMAZON'S HQ2 DEBACLE

The “I love New York” campaign has been used to promote New York City for more than forty years. These days, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos would most likely use different words to describe his feelings for the city.

Amazon’s success has been fueled by customers who love using the site. Even though a vocal bunch of holdouts relish disparaging it, New Yorkers are as ardent Amazon.com fans as anyone else.

But Amazon didn’t feel the love. After a few meetings with unions, the e-commerce behemoth packed up its HQ2 suitcases and departed NYC like a jilted lover, leaving stunned residents and politicians in its wake and \$3 billion in tax breaks on the table.



Peter Burger

A public relations post-mortem reveals an Amazon ill-prepared to wage the PR battle needed to appeal to all of NYC’s constituencies.

Amazon could have donned a PR pith helmet and, messaging machete in hand, carved its way through the NYC media jungle.

Hard left off the Queensboro Bridge

The web’s reach and speed not only enabled Amazon’s rise, but also the meteoric ascent of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to the fore of progressive politics and the national political scene. That Amazon failed to factor a progressive Democrat and labor union storm into its plans, however, is simply hard to fathom.

“It could not have been a surprise that the unions and some politicians would be hostile to the company’s plans for a non-union workforce in Queens or the extent of tax concessions offered by the city,” said Allan Ripp, head of New York-based PR boutique Ripp Media.”

Amazon “seems to have failed to anticipate the potential impact of this leftward turn,” said Steve Vitoff, a New York PR veteran.

Meetings of (different) minds

With the rise of the Cortez Democratic party, it behooved Amazon to address the public on its own turf, among whom its regular customers, if not being major fans, wouldn’t be opposed to the company setting up a larger shop in the neighborhood. Given its well-known avoidance of union labor and unionization, what could the company have done better PR-wise regarding labor?

“Amazon should definitely have made a more concerted effort to engage publicly with union leaders and rounded up its own experts to address skepticism and illustrate the many benefits its workforce enjoys,” Ripp said.

Gentrification, deferred

While unemployment in NYC in December 2018 was a record-low 3.9 percent, New York won’t make up for HQ2’s loss. A total of 25,000 future jobs and \$27 billion in new tax revenue generated over 25 years represents a nine-fold return on the investment the city and state were making in the form of tax incentives. This doesn’t include the 1,300 construction jobs and 107,000 in total direct and indirect jobs the deal was projected to create.

Yet Amazon has been served notice by progressives that it’s guilty of ignoring economic inequality. The e-

commerce giant could’ve done much more to demonstrate its commitment to corporate citizenship and its ability to enhance quality of life for Queens residents.

The corporate “welfare” trap

A flurry of news coverage suggested HQ2 was a giveaway, a perception Amazon took surprisingly tepid public efforts to combat. Had Amazon representatives done a better job to illuminate the deal in the context of incentives, then the idea of HQ2 as a form of corporate welfare might have been significantly diminished.

According to Vitoff, a few simple messages delivered through the right vehicles could’ve gone a long way in improving perception, starting with the common but oft-misused term: “subsidies.” “Five-sixths of the package would have come in the form of forward-looking, performance-based incentives, not ‘subsidies,’” Vitoff said.

The multiplier effect

The employee population at HQ2 promised to support the growth of independent entrepreneurial businesses serving a growing number of residents and professionals. A story begging to be told was the growth of the kind of local enterprises that help neighborhoods like Long Island City emerge and flourish, businesses like restaurants, convenience stores, daycare centers and multiple other enterprises employing local residents.

Indeed, the name HQ2 looks exponential. Why not capitalize on that? These messages could’ve been delivered through a vigorous public affairs campaign using various vehicles including op-ed commentary, radio spots, social media and interviews with Amazon’s New York-based employees.

HQ2, interrupted

Companies have personalities too. In the case of its HQ2 withdrawal, Amazon’s personality was seen as arrogant and petulant.

PR consists of compelling information communicated by the right people to the right people. Namely, the message of how HQ2 would benefit working class, small business owners and consumers — not just technology and knowledge workers — needed to reach these audiences via news sites, op-eds, radio and more vehicles.

What was the “Amazon HQ2 narrative?” Was there one? It’s hard to tell. When you don’t speak up for yourself, someone else crafts the story for you, which in Amazon’s case overpowered the brand the company has forged. The result was activists hijacked the storyline of a deal which, despite its faults, promised jobs and tax revenues, and attracted robust popular support and represented a net positive for New York.

The truth of the real economy lived by the average person lies between the noisy message of opposition groups looking to stymie incentives for corporations and an unemployment rate pegged at less than four percent that doesn’t include people who’ve given up looking for work. NYC did want Amazon HQ2. A stronger, better PR effort can save the next big deal from a similar fate.

Peter Burger is an omnichannel content consultant and communications writer. He’s worked with the likes of EY, Deloitte, JPMorgan Chase, Towers Watson, New York Life and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. View his portfolio at aislewpeter.com.

ZIMBABWE HANDS \$1M PACT TO BALLARD

Zimbabwe, reeling from economic sanctions imposed by the US and its allies, has turned to Ballard Partners for strategic consulting and DC advocacy work.



**Emmerson
Mnangagwa**

The Trump administration on March 6 extended sanctions, which were imposed in 2003, against more than 100 Zimbabwe officials and institutions, for another year. Those sanctioned for human rights abuses include former Zimbabwe strongman Robert Mugabe and current president Emmerson Mnangagwa.

Brian Ballard, former head of Florida's Trump Victory fundraising group, is lobbying on behalf of Zimbabwe's minister of foreign affairs.

According to his firm's contract, Zimbabwe lacks access to international financial institutions and is under great diplomatic pressure from western nations.

Ballard's job is to "encourage a re-examination of Zimbabwe from the State Dept. with a view of establishing the best possible bilateral relationship with the US."

The Zimbabwe contract is worth \$1M for two years.

CITIZEN RELATIONS PEDALS HUFFY'S PR

Citizen Relations has earned brand communications duties for Huffly Bicycles, the iconic 125-year-old bike maker based in Dayton.

The firm will handle marketing strategy, digital/social programming and product launches.

John Fowler, Huffly's senior VP for product, marketing, design, said Citizen "understands our creative and strategic needs but can also help tell our stories as we continue to champion our line-up."

Daryl McCullough, CEO of Citizen, said his shop is eager to help Huffly "grow and evolve their products to meet the needs of all types of recreational bike riders."

PATAGONIA HIRES ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE

Patagonia, which says it is in business to save the planet, has recruited Environmental Protection Agency veteran Avi Garbow for the newly created position of environmental advocate.

Garbow, who was the longest-service general counsel at the EPA, is tasked with focusing the resources and sharpening the voice of the outdoor apparel company as it works to promote a more sustainable future.

"Avi will provide leadership and strategy to our commitment to the planet," said Rose Marcario, Patagonia CEO.

Nominated by President Obama, Garbow served as general counsel at the EPA for more than seven years.

He exited for a partner slot at Gibson Dunn & Crutcher law firm in March 2017.



Avi Garbow

Founded more than 40 years ago, Patagonia has reduced its environmental footprint and supports hundreds of green non-profits throughout the world.

LEARNING FROM LGBT CONTROVERSIES

The controversies surrounding recent social media video postings from Walmart and Cottonelle that feature gay men offer an object lesson in how negative reactions can actually work in a campaign's favor.

Walmart's spot focused on two gay men on a blind date at Walmart. Cottonelle posted a tongue-in-cheek video about a gay man feeling more confident meeting his boyfriend's parents after using their toilet paper.

The messages focused on the companies' valuing and commitment to social diversity and were aimed specifically at welcoming attitudes and sensitivities toward the LGBT community.

This was about capturing specific consumer attention, but it was also to show employees and future candidates that the companies were diversity-friendly workplaces. It also sent a powerful message to investors and partners about the meaning of being "open" for business.

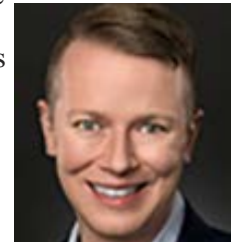
What made these effective was that on cue anti-LGBT groups created an uproar. This got Cottonelle and Walmart vast exposure that "money can't buy" from a hopefully viral ad.

It looks like Walmart and Cottonelle marketers were counting on conservatives' outrage to drive their objectives. The videos were produced for social media. Thus, conservatives didn't simply stumble across them. Instead, they were alerted to them, likely by the companies.

There's a method behind the madness: marketers count on public reaction to their campaigns. Conservatives reliably provide virulent reaction to anything pro-LGBT. It creates a newsworthy controversy.

Social conservatives may not take the bait on another campaign featuring LGBT people, but in the short term, Cottonelle and Walmart were successful. Extensive visibility was achieved. And, ultimately, brand reputations were burnished, not diminished.

Curtis Sparrer is the Principal of Bospar PR. He has represented brands like PayPal, Tetris and the alien hunters of the SETI Institute.



Curtis Sparrer

PARAMOUNT'S KELLEY TO LEAD MGM'S PR

Former Paramount Pictures executive VP-domestic publicity Katie Martin Kelley has been named chief communications officer at Metro Goldwyn Mayer.

Kelley most recently worked as a publicity consultant for Brad Pitt's Plan B Entertainment. She has also been a consultant for Higher Ground Productions, the company established by Barack and Michelle Obama in partnership with Netflix.

At Paramount, Martin Kelley worked on such franchises as *Transformers*, *Star Trek*, *Mission: Impossible* and the *G.I. Joe* series, as well as on awards campaigns for films including Martin Scorsese's *The Wolf of Wall Street*. She also oversaw corporate communications.

At MGM, her remit will be to develop and execute strategic communications programs across all company divisions. She will report directly to COO Christopher Brearton.

TOXIC CULTURE CHALLENGES BOARDS

Avoiding the pitfalls of a dysfunctional corporate culture is becoming an increasingly important issue in the boardrooms of companies around the world, according to a new report conducted by Marsh & McLennan Companies with input from WomenCorporateDirectors.

“A dysfunctional or toxic culture creates inefficiencies and daily instances of underperformance across the organization,” said WomenCorporateDirectors CEO Susan Keating. It also leaves many employees looking for a way out. For example, the report says that 80 percent of women who report sexual harassment change jobs within two years.

That can have a serious effect on an organization’s bottom line. Citing numbers from MMC’s human resources firm Mercer, the study notes that 43 percent of M&A transactions worldwide experienced serious cultural misalignment that caused deals to be delayed or terminated or purchase prices to be negatively impacted.

Because of this, boards are being pressed to focus more of their attention on culture-related issues. MMC interviewed corporate directors to find out what they saw as the signs that a company may be developing a toxic culture. It also asked them for some pointers about how organizations can take action to rectify any problems.



The first danger sign is not having a clear organizational vision or set of values. Several other top indicators also address executive leadership. “Fighting amongst leadership” was cited, as was “debate

and challenge are not encouraged” and “all information runs through the CEO.”

A lack of openness was behind several other warning flags as well. Limited transparency into both organizational decision-making and factors for promotion and success were mentioned. “Bad news is not shared and employees do not feel comfortable reporting incidents” was also on the list.

To take action against these problems, the survey respondents made several suggestions. Making sure that cultural issues were a major consideration in the selection of a CEO was one, as was ensuring that culture was a regularly scheduled board agenda item. As regards pay-related issues, they suggested considering how culture-related elements are factors in the organization’s executive compensation.

Respondents also stressed the importance of board members making the effort to communicate outside the boardroom. “Build relationships beyond the C-suite” and “visit sites to better understand day-to-day operations” were listed as priorities. Also, keeping in touch with the organization’s external reputation through channels such as social media was recommended.

“These warning signs provide a starting point for discussion,” said WCD lead director Kapila Anand. “What is built coming out of this can make the organization more resilient, more innovative, and more attractive to the talent you want to keep and recruit.”

STAGWELL'S PENN EYES MDC

Stagwell Group chief Mark Penn is negotiating to assume the helm of MDC Partners and take an investment stake in the troubled ad/PR firm, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

MDC, which faces a proxy fight at its June 4 shareholder meeting, has been conducting a strategic review.

The firm, which is the parent of Hunter, Allison+Partners, KWT Global and Sloane & Co., lost \$36.2M during the nine-month ended September period on \$1.1B in revenues.

It has long-term debt of \$987M.

MDC CEO Scott Kauffman announced in September that he plans to step down once a successor is named.

Penn, former pollster for Bill and Hillary Clinton, ex-Burson Marsteller CEO and Microsoft chief strategy officer, had earlier tried to buy MDC with Apollo Global Management, according to the WSJ.

Stagwell’s holdings include Finn Partners and SD-KKnicknerbocker.



Mark Penn

INVISIBLE CHILDREN GROUP SEEKS VISIBILITY

Invisible Children, the DC-based nonprofit that seeks to end violence and exploitation facing communities in countries of central Africa, is looking for a PR firm to raise awareness of its work.

The group is active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and supports partners in South Sudan.

Founded in 2004 to end the violence by Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army guerilla group in Uganda, IC received global media attention for its role in organizing a youth mobilization campaign and the release of a 2012 film about Kony and the advocacy effort.

IC envisions a PR partner to highlight its activities and to dispel misconceptions that its mission is completed since the LRA is no longer viewed as a threat to Uganda.

Responses to IC’s RFI are due March 14. They go to Azy Groth at agroth@invisiblechildren.com.

PROPHET PICKS UP SPRINGBOX

Brand marketing consultancy Prophet has acquired Austin, TX-based digital agency Springbox, which specializes in digital design and campaign planning.

Financial terms of the deal, which officially closed March 1, weren’t publicly disclosed.

Springbox will henceforth operate as Springbox, a Prophet company, in light of the acquisition. The Springbox team will remain in its current Austin office and Springbox CEO John Ellett continues his role leading the company. No staff changes were reported.

Prophet in a statement said the move brings new skillsets in digital strategy and demand generation to the agency while placing a foothold in Austin’s tech market.

Chicago-based Prophet maintains a half-dozen offices across the country as well as offices in Berlin, London, Zurich, Hong Kong and Shanghai. It also owns research company Altimeter Group.

COMMENTARY

Donald Trump will not debate the Democratic party's nominee for the presidency. He said as much March 6 with the following tweet:

"Democrats just blocked @FoxNews from holding a debate. Good, then I think I'll do the same thing with the Fake News Networks and the Radical Left Democrats in the General Election debates!"

Democratic National Committee chair Tom Perez decided March 6 that Fox News would neither host nor televise his party's presidential primary debates.



Tom Perez

He made that move following the publication of Jane Mayer's must-read "Trump TV" epic in the *New Yorker*, a piece that has rich details about the symbiotic ties between the president and his Fox propaganda arm.

Trump, who spends most of his day watching TV, is simply lost with Fox. It's all that he's got, said a former Fox host.

Rupert Murdoch's network is Trump's force multiplier, according to Nicole Hemmer, author of "Messengers of the Right." She told Mayer that for Fox and Trump, fear is a business strategy that keeps people watching.

Since the death of former chief Roger Ailes, who at least paid lip service to being "fair and balanced," and Trump's election, Fox has jettisoned all restraint and tossed the basic tenets of journalism out the window.

"Fox & Friends," which Ailes launched as a "fun show" and a way for him to "spout off," provides the president with talking points of the day.

Veteran GOP lobbyist Charlie Black told Mayer, "Trump gets up and watches Fox & Friends and thinks these are his friends. He thinks anything on Fox is friendly. But the problem he gets are unvetted ideas."

Ignoring counsel and belittling White House advisers, Trump turns to Fox for guidance. Media Matters counts more than 200 cases since August 2018, of Trump posting Fox items to his 58M Twitter followers.

The network's prime-time line-up has become even more one-sided with superstar Sean Hannity appearing at Trump rallies, phoning in advice and conducting seven one-on-one interviews with Trump.

Overall, Fox has interviewed the president 44 times compared to a combined ten for CBS, NBC and ABC. CNN has not had an interview with the president

Fox has become Trump's "safe space," according to Mayer.

Jerry Taylor, co-founder of the Niskanen Center moderate think tank in DC, told Mayer, "In a hypothetical world, without Fox News, if president Trump were to be hit hard by the Mueller report, it would be the end of him.

"But, with Fox News covering his back with the Republican base, he has a fighting chance. because he has something no other president in American history has ever

had at his disposal—a servile propaganda operation."

If Perez sticks to his guns, Trump, who views himself as the "most harassed" president in US history will dodge debating a Democratic challenger.

He'll tell his base there's no way he would be treated fairly by appearing in a debate sponsored by one of the "enemies of the people."

Perez provided Trump with an "out." Rather than going head-to-head with an aggressive Democrat, who would expose just how ill-informed the president is about national and international affairs, Trump will seek refuge on the "Most Watched, Most Trusted" network.

His adoring fans will love it and Fox ratings will soar.

Hate groups step up propaganda efforts. Spurred perhaps by outrage over the 2017 "Unite the Right" riot in Charlottesville, hate groups are going underground. They are stepping up the use of propaganda to distribute messages of bigotry in lieu of organizing public events.

The Anti-Defamation League on March 5 released a study showing extremist groups are increasing the use of racist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and anti-LGBTQ leaflets, banners, posters, stickers and flyers to spread ideas of intolerance throughout a community and create fear among members of targeted groups.

The organization found a 182 percent surge to 1,187 propaganda incidents last year.

Ku Klux Klan groups registered 97 incidents, up 20 percent from 2017, in which members left fliers on doorsteps or driveways. The highest activity was in California, New York, Florida, Texas, Illinois and Virginia.

Alt-right groups opted mainly for banners in high-visibility places like highway overpasses. The Texas-based Patriot Front placed 21 of the 32 banner instances in 2018. It also distributed hateful material at multiple synagogues, an African-American church and placed "Fake News Don't Buy It" stickers on newspaper offices.

The use of propaganda allows hate groups to shield the identity of individual members while limiting risks of arrests, bad press and public backlash. It's also cost-effective. Social media amplifies the propaganda messaging.

"Hate groups were emboldened in 2018, but their increase in hate leafleting indicates that most of their members understand this is a fringe activity and are unwilling to risk greater public exposure or arrest," the ADL report said.

As the use of propaganda rises, the number of pre-announced rallies has declined.

Pre-announced rallies that were held last year suffered from low attendance and heavy counter-protests.

The ADL reports the National Socialist Movement sponsored the biggest pre-announced white supremacist event in 2018. It attracted only 40 people to Newnan, GA, to mark the birthday of Adolph Hitler. The 2017 rally drew 125.